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## Cultural Stagnation and Colonial Disruptions in *Things Fall Apart*

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### Abstract

The Paper explores the fall of natives and the gentle rise of colonizers. The colonizers started to dominate the natives via of political, cultural and administrative platforms. Most colonized countries were colonized up to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, then the countries became independent. Still, the colonized countries are following the culture and administrative methods of the British.

The colonized countries had lost their culture and their own identity. In the novel, “Things Fall Apart” the Igbo people lost their culture and also lost the great wrestler’s history. Still today, formerly colonized countries have a conflict between their tradition and the culture of the Britishers.

### Introduction

African literature is literature that originated from Africa. It might be in oral or written form in African and Afro-Asiatic languages. The pre-colonial African literature traced back to at least the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD. Themes in African literature in the colonial period were liberation and independence and also the themes of the battle between tradition and the modern, past condition, and present conditions as well as including the politics and development of the nation, etc.,

According to George Joseph's notes, African literature include the usage of artistic words for the sake of art alone. They do not separate the art from the teaching through this African literature; they communicate facts, truths, and some information to society. Oral literature may be in prose or verse. Here the prose might be mythological or historical and include archetypal characters (god, spirit, anthro-po-morphi-zation). Poems often included themes around praising rulers, rituals, narrative epic, occupational verse, etc. Those that recited the epic (bards) called “griots” and they told their stories with music.

This oral tradition exists in many languages like Fula, Swahili, Hausa, and Wolof. The oral

tradition contains strong emotions among the audiences. It has strong feelings and contains an emotional attachment to the African culture. In the Berber tradition people needed this oral tradition because the majority population of this Berber tradition were illiterate. In Algeria, these poems are said to be Is Efra. They focused on the aspects of both secular and religious life.

Literature that centred on religious life included honouring saints and priests, devotion, and prophetic stories of the particular religion. More secular literature centred on events like birth and weddings but also celebrated great warriors. In Mali, these types of oral traditions or folktales are done on the radio in their native language, Booma.

The works created in the pre-colonial African literature are numerous. The most popular form of African folktale is the trickster story. Trickster story usually includes a small animal creature that uses its wits to survive alongside the larger creatures. For example: Anansi (spider folklore) of the Ashanti people of Ghana, Ijapa (tortoise folklore) of the Yoruba people of Nigeria, and Sungura (hare folklore) is found in central and east African folklore.

Much of the content is about astronomy, poetry, law, history, faith, politics, and philosophy. Many manuscripts are hidden in various libraries and private collections estimated at 3,00,000. These manuscripts are written mostly in Arabic, and some are in native languages like Fula and Songhai. The language of Swahili draws from the preaching of Islam, but it is also influenced and developed by native circumstances. The earliest and most renowned piece of Swahili literature is “Utendi waTambuka” (or) “the story of Tambuka”.

Nigeria has a rich historical and cultural tapestry and has produced lots of authors and who have gone onto produce outstanding works in the genres of fiction, drama, poetry, biography, and autobiography. The best prominent writers who gained international fame such as Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, and Ben Okri in Africa.

In the 8<sup>th</sup> century, there was the arrival of Arabs and Islam in Africa. By the 14<sup>th</sup> century, there was the existence of the Arabic language in Northern Nigeria both written as well as spoken. The native author, entitled *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Oludah Equaino*, or *Gustavus Vassa, the African*, wrote the first book. It was an account of an Igbo slave and was published in 1789. So, this work was widely read in England very and soon it was published in several editions in England. It was the first slave autobiography of a native author, and it became the most influential work in Britain where it is a period of rapid growth in the anti-slavery movement in

Britain. Chinua Achebe was born on 16 November 1930, and he is called the father of African Literature. He was a Nigerian Novelist, poet, and critic writer. The first novel of Chinua Achebe is *Things Fall Apart* and it is a Magnum opus. *Things Fall Apart*, was published in 1958.

## **Chinua Achebe's Background**

### ***Education***

**Bard College** is a private, co-educational institution of higher learning in Annandale-on-Hudson, New York, U.S. It is affiliated with the Episcopal Church. A liberal arts college, it includes divisions of social studies, languages and literature, arts, natural sciences, and mathematics, as well as the Milton Avery Graduate School of the Arts. In addition to undergraduate studies, the college offers master's degree programs in the fine arts, the history of the decorative arts, curatorial studies, and environmental studies, and a doctorate program in the history of the decorative arts, design, and culture. The Edith C. Blum Institute and the Institute for Writing and Thinking are located on campus.

The college is also home to the Richard and Marieluise Black Center for Curatorial Studies and Art in Contemporary Culture, which includes the Rivendell Collection of Late Twentieth Century Art. Bard operates an ecology field station along the Hudson River. Total enrollment is approximately 1,300. The college was founded in 1860 as St. Stephen's, an Episcopal college for men; John Bard, a member of a prominent local family, was the principal founder.

In 1919, the college added courses in social and natural sciences to its classical curriculum to broaden and secularize its mission. Columbia University, in New York City took control of the college in 1928. It became Columbia's undergraduate school. Its name changed to Bard College in 1934. Bard ended its relationship with Columbia in 1944 and that same year began admitting women. The postgraduate Jerome Levy Economics Institute was formed in 1986. In 1977, the college affiliated with the Lacoste School of the Arts in Lacoste, France.

Noted artists and writers who have taught at Bard include Isaac Bashevis Singer, Ralph Ellison, Roy Lichtenstein, Mary McCarthy, Saul Bellow, and Chinua Achebe. In addition to his writing career, Achebe maintained an active teaching career. In 1972, he was appointed to a three-year visiting professorship at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and, in 1975, to a one-year visiting professorship at the University of Connecticut. In 1976, with matters sufficiently calm in Nigeria, he returned as a professor of English at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, with

which he affiliated since 1966. In 1990, he became the Charles P. Stevenson, Jr., professor of literature at Bard College, Annandale, New York.

*Things Fall Apart*, was published in 1958. Along with this novel, he wrote two more novels, '*No Longer at Ease*' and '*Arrow of God*', which were published in 1960 and 1964 respectively. It's called the complete "*African Trilogy*". His father was Okafo Achebe; he was a teacher and evangelist. His mother was Janet Anaenechilloegbunam; she was a churchwoman and a vegetable former.

### ***Upbringing***

His birthplace was Nneobi, which was near the Igbo village of Ogibdi. The Ogidi area was part of the British colony in Nigeria during his period. Storytelling was an integral part of the Igbo community. He also heard many stories from his mother and his sister Zinobia that he requested repeatedly. He read many books including prose adaptations of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and he heard about the Igbo's version of *The Pilgrim's Progress* written by John Bunyan in 1678. Hence, Achebe anticipated the traditional events of the village like the Masquerade ceremonies. One of his teachers encouraged his handwriting and reading skills.

In 1936, for his primary education, he studied at St. Philips Central School, which is located in the Akpakaogwe region. Quickly he moved to a higher class, and then he did his secondary education at the prestigious Government College Umuahia. It is located in Abia where it is the present status of that place.

In 1942, outside of Owerri, he enrolled his name in Nekede Central Schools. Then he passed the entrance examinations for two colleges. He had received over 30 honorable degrees from universities in the places of Nigeria, Canada, South Africa, The United Kingdom, and The United States of America, and from Dartmouth College, Harvard, and Brown.

### ***Career***

In 1972, he was honored with the first Commonwealth Poetry Prize, and in 1979 he got the Nigerian National Order of Merit and the Order of the Federal Republic. In 1982, he got an honorary fellowship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. In 1999, he was awarded the St. Louis Literary Award. Then he got prize the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade in 2002 and in 2007 he got the Man Booker International Prize. In 2010, he got the Dorothy and



Lillian Gish Prize. In 1999, the United Nations Population Fund appointed him as a goodwill ambassador.

He accepted many awards from the African government, but he refused the Commander of the Federal Republic award in the year of 2004. He is regarded as the most influential writer of modern African Literature. *Things Fall Apart* sold over 20 million copies worldwide. It has been translated into 57 languages.

### ***Private Life***

This work uniquely regards the impact on not only African literature but western literature also. Achebe married Christie on 10 September 1961. The ceremony occurred in the Chapel of Resurrection on the campus of the University of Ibadan. His first child was his daughter, and they named her Chinelo. She was born on 11 July 1962. They had a son named Ikechukuru and another boy, named Chidi they were born on 3 December 1964 and 24 May 1967, respectively. Finally, they had a daughter named Nwando and she was born on 7 March 1970.

Their children studied in Lagos, and they faced racism. Hence Chinua Achebe wrote his first children's book named *Chike and the River* in 1966. He had written many novels some of which were *A Man of the People* written in 1966, and *Anthills of the Savannah*, written in 1987. He has published many short stories, which, are mostly based upon the Conflict between the Native culture and Western culture. In 1951, he wrote *In a Village Church*. Then in 1952, he wrote *The Old Order with the New*. In 1953, he wrote *Dead Men's Path* which was republished in the year of 1962.

### ***Other Works***

In 1959 he wrote *The Sacrificial Egg and Other Stories* too. In addition, he published *Beginning of the End*. In 1965, he had written *Voter*. In 1971, he wrote *Civil Peace*, and in 1972, he wrote *Sugar Baby*. In the same year, he published *Girls at War and other stories, Marriage is a private affair* and then *Vengeful Creditor*. In 1985, *African short stories: 20 Stories from across the continent*.

In 1992 he published, *The Heineman Book of Contemporary African Short Stories*. He wrote several poems too. So, of them were from 1951 to 1952 he published *There Was a Young Man in Our Hall*. In 1971, *Beware Soul Brother and Other Poems*. In 1973, he wrote *Christmas in Biafra and other poems*. In the same year, he published *Flying*. In 1974, he wrote *The Old Man*

and the Census. In 1978, he wrote *Don't Let Him Die: An Anthology of Memorial Poems for Christopher Okigbo*, and in 1988, he wrote *Another Africa*.

In 2004, he wrote many children's books. In 1972 he published *How the Leopard Got his Claws*. In 1977, he had written *The Drum* and *The Flute*. Achebe received many awards from academic and cultural institutions around the world. In 1959, he won the Margaret Wong Memorial Prize for *Things Fall Apart*. The following year, after the publication of its sequel, *No Longer at Ease*, he was awarded the Nigerian National Trophy for Literature.

His book of poetry, *Christmas in Biafra*, written during the Nigerian Civil War, won the first Commonwealth Poetry Prize in 1972. More than twenty universities in Great Britain, Canada, Nigeria, and the United States have awarded Achebe honorary degrees. Like many other African writers, Achebe believes that artistic and literary works must deal primarily with the problems of society.

He has said, "Art is, and always was, at the service of man" rather than an end, accountable to no one. He believes that "any good story, any good novel, should have a message, should have a purpose." Other prominent writers in Africa include Ben Okri, Nadine Gordimer, Buchi Emechata, Ayi Kwei Armah, Dinaw Mengestu, Wole Soyinka, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, and Alain Mabanckou.

## **Things Fall Apart**

The story starts in a village named Umuofia and it is a period of the late 1890s. Okonkwo was the protagonist of this novel, and he was a member of the Igbo tribe. This tribe resides in nine villages located by the lower Niger River in southern Nigeria. He was a good wrestler. He defeated Amalinze "the cat". Okonkwo was also a successful farmer. He had a large family with three wives.

He had no patience with unsuccessful people, his father. Unoka was an unsuccessful person incapable of anything, but he was good at the flute and he was a great debtor. Okonkwo was deeply affected because of his father. He felt ashamed of his unsuccessful father. He made himself as strong as possible on the outside but had a great fear inside him that he and his children should

not be found like his father. *“The sun will shine those who stand before it shines on those who kneel under them.” (TFA-6)*

Okonkwo was a hard worker, and he became so popular in the village, that the village gave the responsibility to take care of the boy who was from a neighboring village to avoid the bloodshed and war between the two villages. Everyone in Umoufia heard the message, and everyone in Umoufia was asked to assemble in the marketplace the next morning. Everyone arrived and the leader of Umoufia, Ogbuefi Ezeugo, welcomed everybody and started the meeting. Someone from Mbaino has killed the woman in Umoufia. She was the wife of Ogbuefi Udo. This caused a stir. They asked the Mbaino people to choose either war or to offer a virgin woman and young boy as compensation. Neighboring villages of Umoufia were afraid of this village because it was a powerful village in war, hence they decided to compensate with Umoufia. *“Those sons of wild animals have dared to murder a daughter of Umoufia” (TFA-9).*

Long ago, Unoka had consulted Agbala the Oracle of the Hills and the Caves. Many people from far and near places came to consult their future spirit and their spirit ancestors. When his father consults him, he says that Unoka’s fate is found by the bad chi or the Personal God. He said, “Go home and work like a man”. Unoka developed a swelling in his stomach and limbs, and this was regarded against the earth goddess according to Okonkwo’s clan. Also, according to their clan, these people should not die at home and instead should be left to die in the evil forest.

Okonkwo did not have anything, so he started his life by himself. He met Nwokie, who was a rich person and Okonkwo approached him and asked for some yam seeds to harvest. He gave him four hundred yam seeds and then he met another person, one of his father’s friends named Isiuzo and got four hundred more yam seeds from him. Nevertheless, unfortunately, that year there was no rain. The sun blistered the entire land, and the yam seeds were destroyed. The crops failed. Many farmers were hanged but Okonkwo was very strong, however, he overcame all the obstacles.

Okonkwo insults the clan man named Osugo in the clan meeting. But everyone else supported Osugo so Okonkwo apologized to him. Ikemefuna was under the responsibility of Okonkwo’s first wife; she took care of him like her own son. Ikemefuna was very stubborn at first, but he soon came to call Okonkwo as father.

*“I am not afraid of work. The Lizard that jumped from the high iroko tree to the ground*

*said he would praise himself if no one else did. I began to fend for myself at an age when most people still suck at their mothers' breasts. If you give me some yam seeds I shall not fail you". (TFA-17).*

Okonkwo also had more affection for him, but he never shows it to him because he thinks that emotions make a person weak. Ikemefuna had many talents like being good at storytelling. By using bamboo and elephant leaves, he makes a flute and he uses it very well.

The village had a week called the "Week of Peace", where the week must be peaceful among clan members "No work was done in the period of the week of peace". But Okonkwo failed to obey the rules of the tribe's people. During this time, his third wife Ojiugo, went to her friend's house to plait her hair and then came late to home. He beat her black and blue. Then Ezeani ordered him to compensate for his mistakes by giving her a goat, one hen, a length of cloth, and a hundred cowries. People enjoy the week to the fullest by drinking palm wine with their neighbors. Okonkwo does not have a good opinion of his son Nwoye, and he beats him for the small mistakes. He behaves rudely and shows his masculine character to everyone. At this time, Nwoye and Ikemefuna became close.

The feast of the new yam was nearing, and the entire village was in a festive mood. It is a festival of thanking Ani. This tribe's people used to honor the earth goddess and the ancestral spirits of the clan. The new yam should be first offered to this power and then alone they should eat. Okonkwo does not enjoy the feast. He insisted that every preparation must be done properly since he hosts a large family.

The villagers gather to watch the wrestling match. One match excites everyone in the crowd. The victory of that match was Maduka. He was Oberika's son. Oberika was friend of Okonwo. During the wrestling match, Ekwefi chatted with Chielo. Chielo was a widow and had two children and she is the priestess of Agbala. Chielo is fond of Ezinma hence she asked about her.

Okonwo is very fond of Ikemefuna. He wants his son to "Grow into a tough young man capable of ruling his father's household. According to Okonkwo, if he does not control his women and children then he is not a man. In his obi, he used to tell stories like the boy's violent, bloody stories Nwoye prefers his mother's stories, which have moral stories. Okonkwo and the boys are working together and eating locusts, which rarely appear. In the meantime, Ezeudu, a fearless old

warrior privately reports to Okonkwo, and he talks about the Oracle's order to kill Ikemefuna. He gave a caution not to take play a role in killing Ikemefuna because the boy "Calls you his father".

Ikemefuna was being taken to his home again while walking with Okonkwo and other clan members into the forest. The clan members started to throw weapons on him and attacked him. Okonkwo felt very bad, he killed Ikemefuna, and Okonkwo returned to his home with guilt. Nwoye became devastated. Okonkwo felt very guilty, and he did not do anything for two days - just had wine.

When he calls Nwoye, he goes off. The next day Ezinma comes to Okonkwo's obi and gives him a portion of food, and she consoles him. Then he met his friend Oberika and they were discussing about the victory of Madhuka in the wrestling match. Okonkwo was worried about Nwoye's act towards him and Oberika asked why he had taken part in killing Ikemefuna. After meeting his friend, he felt somewhat happy and relaxed.

Okonkwo participates in his friend's daughter's betrothal ceremony. Then their negotiations were over. Okonkwo and others discuss the other clans. They believe in the concept of white men, one of the men mocks the white skin, which is compared with the disease Leprosy, and one man doubts the existence of these beings, whom they have heard of but not seen.

Ekwefi panicked and called Okonkwo because "Ezinma is dying" Then Okonkwo ran to Ekwefi's hut and said that Ekwefi had a fever (iba). Before Ezinma, Ekwefi had nine children, but every child died and there is a belief in Igbo tradition that the dead child will born again in the mother's womb. After the child's birth, they should destroy the stone where the dead child is buried in the evil forest. A year ago, medicine man found the Iyi-uwa of Ezinma and destroyed the stone. (Ogbanje - The dead child reenters their mother's body and waits to be reborn.) (Iyi-uwa - The stone of the ogbanje that must be destroyed.) Ekwefi believed that Ezinma was Ogbanje and when Ezinma was sick for the first time Okonkwo prepared medicine and then she fell asleep.

The crowd assembled at the village gathering place called Ilo NineEgwugwu Judges. A man said that his wife's relative kidnapped his wife and his children. He went to his wife's relative. He went to his in-law's house and told them to return to his wife and children as per the law of the clan. Then the wife's family told the truth. He would beat her every day. They were married for about nine years. On beating her she was about to die. Then the Egwugwu gave the solution that he should beg to have his wife return. In addition, they advise the wife's family to accept his

request.

Chielo comes to Okonkwo's compound to see Ezinma. Okonkwo said that the child was asleep. Ekwefi wants to go with her. Then Chielo carries Ezinma away. Then Ekwefi told to Okonkwo that she was going to follow Chielo, and she followed her all night through nine villages. Then Okonkwo took her to Chielo's cave, which is the oracle's cave. They wait outside and she appreciates his coming. Okonkwo took her into his hut. Chielo returns with Ezinma to Okonkwo's compound; Okonkwo had not slept overnight. He felt very anxious.

The villagers were all in a festive mood. They all prepared the arrangements for Oberika-daughter's Uri (Betrothal ceremony). Therefore, Oberika purchased a goat far from the market marketplace to present to his in-laws. While they were preparing food, the cows lost them, and they ran away. Oberika's in-laws came with fifty pots of wine, as the ceremony started, they started it with toasts, singing, and dancing. The crowd was cheering them, and the bride appeared. This shows cultural unity among them. Ezedu, a clan member announces, 'Not to participate in the killing of Ikemefuna'. Ezedu was an old member, and he was dead. Hence, the clan members do the rituals, drums are beaten, and guns and cannons are fired. He had the rare accomplishment of taking three titles.

Okonkwo also took part in the gun shoot to salute him unfortunately, he killed the clan member, and it was Ezedu's sixteen-year-old son. In the Igbo tradition, killing a clan member is an offense to their God. However, Okonkwo's killing was an accident hence they made a judgment, that he would not live in the village for seven years after seven years he could join their clan. His entire family went to his mother's village, Mbanta. Then Ezedu's neighbor destroys Okonkwo's compound, and they cleanse the land of Okonkwo. Okonkwo's friend Oberika questioned the traditional cleansing ritual because it was just an accident. Oberika follows the clan's customs, but he disagrees with some of the clan's customs.

Okonkwo came to his mother's land. His maternal uncle, Uchendu, welcomed him. Then Uchendu and his children gave him land and assisted him in building a compound and they gave him seed yams to plant on his farm. This was a new beginning hence it required lots of hard work and Okonkwo likes to do hard work but now he was less enthusiastic.

His goal is to become one of the lords of the clan and he was on the path to achieving it but unfortunately, it became so far away. Then Uchendu's son is marrying a new wife. Following the

ceremony, Uchendu tries to show his great loss, that Okonkwo might accept his exile and make the best of himself. Uchendu has buried five wives and twenty-two children. In exile in the second year, Oberika came to visit Okonkwo, and the two men went to speak with Uchendu.

### ***Arrival of White Men***

Oberika said that the Abame clan was wiped out. A white man has appeared in the village. When they consulted the oracle, he declared that the white man “Would break their clan and spread destruction among themselves”, and then the oracle said that other white men also would come to their village, and he called the white men locusts. Clan members killed the man. Uchendu asked what the stranger said - he had spoken something, but he did not understand.

Later, Oberika tells the men that some ordinary men saw the three white men in the clan. This man saw a stranger’s bicycle placed in a tree. Surrounding the market in Abame village, they shot everyone there. Those Abame clan people were fools. Uchendu said, “Never kill a man who says nothing”. Okonkwo agreed on this.

Though white men brought advancement through education and medicine, they also oppressed indigenous people and eradicated their culture. The missionaries changed many people. After two years, again Oberika came to visit Okonkwo, told them about the activities of Nwoye, and said that the missionaries arrived in Umofia. They built a church, and they also converted many, but the elders were saying that don’t believe in new gods that would not stay forever. Then the missionaries arrived in the village of Mbanta. There were six members and one white man.

The white man conveys his message through the Interpreter; he is an Igbo man, but their dialects are different. He told about the new God. Then he said that they were worshiping the wrong God. The missionary talked about the Holy Trinity. Okonkwo concluded that the man was mad. When the missionaries started to sing Nwoye felt relief. The words of the song were like the rain that melted on the panting Earth.

The missionaries came to preach in the Mbanta marketplace. Then they asked for land that they could use to preach. The native people gave the evil forest. They believed “With Sinister forces”. The false interpretation in their mind. No one believes that they accept the evil forest, and the elders of the native people say that they are going to fail in their mission. According to their belief, the God and the ancestor vengeance will occur within twenty-eight days. Then missionaries build a church.



When the 28<sup>th</sup> day came, nothing happened. Many had converted to Christianity. According to the native tribe, people believe that infants should be killed when it is born in twins. Her previous pregnancy was twins. Nwoye became attracted to the missionaries. In the beginning, he does not dare to go near the missionaries because of his father Okonkwo. After some period, he goes to church, which is seen by his cousin Amikuru and tells this to Okonkwo. Then Okonkwo bet him black and white.

The leader of Mbanta church Mr. Kiaga blesses Nwoye because he “forsakes his father”. Mr. Kiaga insists everyone convert, a Christian has killed a python and the Mbanta leaders gather to decide how to proceed. The Python is a sacred animal of Igbo tribespeople called “Our Father” by them. Okonkwo forced the missionaries to go out of their village for this incident.

Okali is the man, who killed the great python, he fell ill, and he died. This shows confirmation that the Gods were still able to fight their own battles. As a result, they decide not to ostracize the Christian clan members. His exile was completed. His seven years of exile have passed in the villages of Mbanta and Okonkwo, and he had prospered.

He is anxious about returning home, he regrets everything because of his exile. Then Okonkwo sends some money to Oberika, who was Okonkwo’s friend to construct huts so that his whole family can live again when they return to Umuofia. Then Okonkwo told his wife to prepare for the feast. This feast will be thanks to his mother’s relatives. Then the elder of their family thanked Okonkwo for the great feast. He had done more than they expected.

He confides that the younger generation are changing to the new religion. He fears that “Abominable religion that has settled among you. After seven years of Okonkwo’s exile, Okonkwo came to his village Umuofia, where everything was changed. Umuofia was the headquarters for the missionaries. As he went into exile, another filled his place, it was like “The clan was like a lizard”, if it lost its tails, it soon grew another.

Okonkwo planned everything for his return to Umuofia, in the first year of his exile itself. His yams grew abundantly even in Umuofia also, his friend gave him a share of it. He did his harvest in the motherland also Nwoye was changed into a Christian and he insisted to other sons, that if they went against him after Okonkwo’s death, he would visit and break their neck.

Ezinma grew up with her father’s exile and she was the beautiful girl in Mbanta. She got the title of “Crystal of Beauty”, she refused all men in Mbanta, and she wished to marry in Umuofia



as her father told her. He advised her to explain to her half-sister Obiageli. The missionaries made all the natives into Christians.

One of the men named Ogbuefi Ugonna, has received two titles but he rejects all this and joins with the Christian missionaries. They not only brought church, but they also brought government. They also built a court where the district collector is being there. Then the court messengers came from Umuru on the bank of the Great River.

When they came for the first time to Umuofia, they were called Kotma and wore ash-colored shorts the whites were called ashy buttocks. They imprisoned the men who were against the white law. Then they killed a man who mocked them by singing a song and Okonkwo asked Oberika why our clan members do not fight with the whites. Oberika remembered the destruction of the Abame clan, and they both sat silently. In chapter twenty, the Igbo clans were destroyed. There are no more titles that gave more fame to the clan.

The white men brought many changes in Umuofia, particularly in the trading store and the money. The clan started to appreciate the white missionaries. Mr. Brown was a white missionary and a patient man. He becomes friendly with the clan members and becomes friendly with a member named Akunna. Mr. Brown courts interest in building schools and a hospital in the village, of Umuofia. Mr. Brown asked every village to allow their children to schools. He said that the future leaders of this village should read and write.

The non-native people or outsiders might colonize them then families of that village send their students to school. Every family in the village slowly started to change to the new religion. Mr. Brown talks about Nwoye's education to Okonkwo, that Okonkwo will be happy, but Okonkwo chases him and threatens him. However, the white people already influenced the Village people. He realized that the changes have occurred in the clan, which has "So unaccountably become soft like women". Mr. Brown leaves the village and is then succeeded by Mr. Smith. Mr. Smith was a strict zealot. He does not care about the number of converts to the church, the converts must be faithful. Enoch was a zealous convert, and he committed a crime. The elders of the clan destroyed Enoch's compound. Smith and followers of Smith hid Enoch, and they met the crowd outside the Church. They explained that they were going to destroy the church, and they said that they were not going to allow it in their midst.

Smith asked them to leave the church, but they said that they were going to destroy the

church. Okonkwo feels the clan changed into the old way they were. He had convinced the people in Umuofia to arm themselves. They will be prepared. Nothing else happens to the people of the Abame clan. After three days, the District Commissioner's messenger to the office invited Okonkwo. Okonkwo and five other clan members went to the office because the people of Umuofia did not refuse a call while going to the missionaries' office they took machetes.

One of the Umuofia men began to explain why the church was destroyed. The District Commissioner put Okonkwo and others in prison. They forcibly shave the head of the prisoner and beat them. The court messengers go to Umuofia and tell them what has happened. The people of Umuofia decide to pay the fine "to appease the white men".

Okonkwo and the other five men were referred from the prison. Clansmen do not welcome them, but they simply move out of their way. Okonkwo's relations and his friends gather at his hut. They notice the marks on his back; nobody talks to Okonkwo except Oberika. Okonkwo did not sleep, he was very humiliated, he was preparing for war, and He had a vengeance on white missionaries. If the village fights against them, he will join and take an act of revenge on them. They spoke about the meeting. The meeting will be held the following day.

The people gathered, one of the prisoners was Okika he said that their Gods were weeping. Then the court messengers to stop the meeting interrupted the meeting. Okonkwo beheads the in-charge messenger and the villager allows the other messengers to get away. He realizes that there will be no war.

The District Commissioner destroyed the Okonkwo's compound with his group of soldiers. Then he asked Oberika where Okonkwo is. He answered he was not there, then the white missionaries threatened him then Oberika showed Okonkwo. Okonkwo hangs himself.

Oberika said that Okonkwo's body was evil and only strangers touched that. Then Oberika spoke angrily with the district commissioner and said Okonkwo was a great man. The District Commissioner tells him to remove the body of Okonkwo. The District Commissioner understood the people of Africa and planned to write a book about the African people. He calls the book name as "The Pacification of the Primitive Tribes of the Lower Niger".

Things Fall Apart was the title taken from the poem The Second Coming. William Butler Yeats wrote it.

"Turning and turning in the widening Gyre

The falcon cannot hear the falconer;  
Things fall apart; the center cannot hold;  
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world.”

*Second coming (1-4 lines)*

## CHAPTER II

### POST-COLONIAL THEORY

Europe's dominance over the rest of the world began in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The European countries (England, France, Spain, Portugal, and the Netherlands) colonized the other countries and expanded their territories. Great Britain was the largest empire to rule a quarter of the world by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

However, British colonial rule ends gradually at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. For India, British rule ended after World War II when gained Independence in 1947. By 1980, England had lost all its colonial possessions. Thus, the concept of one nation ruling the other has become unthinkable in the present day.

When post-colonialism is referred to as a literary study, it emerged during the late 1980s or the early 1990s. Now, it has attained wide currency because of the influence of some works. They are Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*, which was published in 1961. It talks about the dehumanizing effect of colonization upon the individual and the nature.

Edward Said's *Orientalism* analyzes the representation on the East as exotic, feminine, weak, and vulnerable reflecting and defining how the West views itself as rational, masculine, and powerful. This work was published in 1978. Homi Bhabha's *Nation and Narration* was published in 1980. Helen Tiffin and Bill Ashcroft's *The Empire Writer Back*, was published in 1989. However, there were anti-colonial political movements long before that were responsible for getting independence and local self-governance.

Post-colonial refers to all the cultures affected by imperialism from colonization to the present day. It analyses the results and effects of colonial oppression. It also analyses the literature that was affected by the imperial process and as a response to colonial domination. Post-colonialism is nothing but examines the impact of colonial rule, ruling in the political, cultural, aesthetic, economic, historical, and linguistic also. It includes the study of the effects of

colonialism.

Some of the authors like Edward Said, Gayatri Chakrabarty Spivak, and Frantz Fanon. It seeks to take part or to alter a result and to increase the strength of the insignificant (marginalized) viewpoints. It produces relations between different people and their cultures then it challenges power and existing assumptions. In recent times, the three French thinkers who paid more attention to the field of literary theory were Michael Foucault, Jacques Derrida, and Jacques Lacan. In post-colonial theory, Foucault showed his greatest influence. Then Said showed his very marked way in post-colonial theory and he termed it as *Orientalism* after this Spivak and Bhabha also drew from him. Spivak was more influenced by Derrida.

Bhabha was more influenced by Lacan in the post-colonial theory. In post-colonial theory, power is the major issue. Foucault's view of power started 'Discourse'. He mentioned the power in the history of Sexuality, Volume One, and an Introduction. Post-colonialism, experienced with colonialism, clearly shows the present effect.

The ex-colonial society shows the Global Development thought to the after-effects of civilization. The post-colonial talks about decolonization, and the dehumanizing effects of colonization upon the individual and nature then it talks about the cultural alienation of natives. Discourse refers to all the cultures affected by imperialism from colonization to the present day. In addition, post-colonialism tends to focus on Global Issues comparisons, and contrasts between various people. Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*. It was published in 1961. It is one of the examples of colonial discourse. By 1980, Commonwealth literature made sense of the impacts of colonialism.

Therefore, this was the greatest awareness in power relations. All these led to the study and analysis of colonialism and its after-effects in this post-colonial theory. Post-colonial theory is a body of thought primarily concerned with accounting for the political, aesthetic, economic, historical, and social impact of European colonial rule around the world in the 18th through the 20th century.

Post-colonial theory takes many different shapes and interventions, but all share a fundamental claim: that the world we inhabit is impossible to understand except in relationship to the history of imperialism and colonial rule. This means that it is impossible to conceive of "European philosophy," "European literature," or "European history" as existing in the absence of

Europe's colonial encounters and oppression around the world.

It also suggests that the colonized world stands at the forgotten centre of global modernity. The prefix “post” of “postcolonial theory” has been rigorously debated, but it has never implied that colonialism has ended; indeed, much of postcolonial theory is concerned with the lingering forms of colonial authority after the formal end of the Empire. Other forms of postcolonial theory are openly endeavouring to imagine a world after colonialism, but one, that has yet to come into existence. Postcolonial theory emerged in the US and UK academics in the 1980s as part of a larger wave of new and politicized fields of humanistic inquiry, most notably feminism and critical race theory.

As it is generally constituted, postcolonial theory emerges from and is deeply indebted to anticolonial thought from South Asia and Africa in the first half of the 20th century. In the US and UK academics, this has historically meant that its focus has been on these regions, often at the expense of theory emerging from Latin and South America.

Over the course of the past thirty years, it has remained simultaneously tethered to the fact of colonial rule in the first half of the 20th century and committed to politics and justice in the contemporary moment. This has meant that it has taken multiple forms: it has been concerned with forms of political and aesthetic representation; it has been committed to accounting for globalization and global modernity; it has invested in reimagining politics and ethics from underneath imperial power, an effort that remains committed to those who continue to suffer its effects.

It has been interested in perpetually discovering and theorizing new forms of human injustice, from environmentalism to human rights. Postcolonial theory has influenced the way we read texts, the way we understand national and transnational histories, and the way we understand the political implications of our knowledge as scholars. Despite frequent critiques from outside the field (as well as from within it), postcolonial theory remains one of the key forms of critical humanistic interrogation in both academia and the world.

Othering involves two concepts — the “Exotic Other” and the “Demonic Other,” The Exotic Other represents a fascination with the inherent dignity and beauty of the primitive or undeveloped other, as delineated in Yeats *Byzantium* poems; while the Demonic Other is represented as inferior, negative, savage and evil as is described in novels like *Heart of Darkness*

and *A Passage of India*.

In *Orientalism*, Said argues the relation of culture, history, and ideas. This work is seen as the person who creates or initiates something of post-colonial theory and discourse. *Can the Subaltern Speak?* Written by Gayathri Chakraborty Spivak, this work shows important terms called ‘Subaltern’ and ‘essentialism’ that relate to post-colonial theory. She made awareness of ignoring the native peoples and they called ‘Others’. Take, for example, the issue of global inequality. Post-colonialism suggests that to better understand how global class relations emerge and are maintained we must address ideas about why these relations appear normal. This approach points to how characterizations of global poverty are often accompanied by images and narratives of non-Western governments and societies as simultaneously primitive, hyper-masculine, aggressive, childlike, and effeminate.

In short, post-colonialism argues that addressing and finding solutions to poverty and global inequality come up against representations of the other that make it difficult for Western policymakers to shed their biases and address the underlying global structural factors such as how capital and resources are accumulated and flow around the world generating inequality. For this reason, solutions often focus only on intervening to support a seemingly less developed state, rather than addressing the underlying causes of global inequality.

In analysing how key concepts such as power, the state, and security serve to reproduce the status quo, post-colonialism proposes a more complex view of such concepts than is characteristic of traditional theories. For example, the concept of sovereignty, and with it the contours of the modern state, were imposed on the colonial world by European powers.

Yet it is a concept that is usually taken for granted by scholars of realism and liberalism. Post-colonialism also challenges the Marxist perspective that class struggle is at the root of historical change – instead demonstrating how *race* shapes history. Analyses that focus only on class fail to consider how the identification of the ‘Third World’ (a term developed during the Cold War to describe those states unaligned to the United States or the Soviet Union) as ‘backward’, ‘primitive’ or ‘non-rational’ are linked to persistent economic marginalization. Similarly, while mainstream IR theories see the international system as an anarchy, postcolonial scholars see it as a hierarchy.

Colonialism and imperialism fostered a long process of continued domination of the West

over the rest of the world and cultural, economic, and political domination still characterize global politics. Post-colonialism also demonstrates how Western views about Islam and its adherents are a manifestation of the West's insecurities. The rise of political Islam across the Muslim world – watermarked by Iran's Islamic Revolution in 1979 – not only confronted neo-imperialist interventions but also revealed the impacts of core cultural and social shifts accompanying a more interconnected global economy.

In the West, however, prominent policymakers and academics as heralding a 'clash of civilizations' (Huntington 1993) and worse, constituting a direct threat to Western civilization have interpreted the view of this resurgence. Edward Said (1997) showed how Western media, film, academia, and policy elites rely on a distorted lens or framework used to describe the history and culture of Arab peoples and adherents of Islam. He called it Orientalism because it constructs a particular idea of the so-called 'Orient' that is distinct from the West and that in a binary or dualistic way of thinking ascribes to the Orient.

Its inhabitant's characteristics are essentially the opposite of the West. For instance, people of the Orient may be characterized as being exotic, emotional, feminine, backward, hedonistic, non-rational, and so forth. This contrasts with the more positive attributes usually associated with the West such as rationality, masculinity, civilization, and modernity.

Many postcolonial scholars emphasize how orientalist discourses are still visible in Western representations today. Representations and perceptions matter to postcolonial theorists because they dictate what comes to be seen as normal or as making sense. Postcolonialism owes a significant debt to Edward Said for his work on developing Orientalism.

Yet Said himself was influenced by the writing of anti-colonial and nationalist thinkers such as Frantz Fanon (1967) and Albert Memmi (1991) whose works discuss the power of 'othering'. For example, Fanon shows how race shapes the way that the colonizer relates to the colonized and vice versa by capturing how some people under colonial rule began to internalize – that is, identify with – ideas of racial difference that saw 'others as inferior to white Europeans.

Fanon explains that the 'black man' is made to believe in his inferiority to the 'white colonizers' through psychological aspects of colonization, such as the imposition of the colonizer's language, culture, religion, and education systems. Through such impositions, the colonized come to believe they are culturally inferior to others. This internalization made it easier for colonizers to



justify and maintain their rule.

Postcolonialism thus brings into focus how racial binaries – that is, how races are constructed as different, opposite, or ‘other’ continue even after the end of formal colonial rule. It highlights how *racialized othering* frames not just history, but contemporary debates such as national security, nuclear politics, nationalism, culture, immigration, international aid, and the struggle for indigenous rights.

An example of racialized othering can be found in discourses around nuclear non-proliferation. In such discourses, countries and their leaders in the Global South are usually deemed not to be trusted with nuclear weapons. These dominant discourses construct these states as dangerous, unpredictable, or unaccountable and as violating basic norms on human rights.

One need only look at how North Korea and Iran, two states that have pursued nuclear proliferation, are portrayed as rogue states in US foreign policy discourse. Yet, for decades, the West’s disregard for human rights may be seen in uranium mining that has often taken place on lands that are populated by indigenous peoples around the world – including in the United States – and has caused death, illness, and environmental degradation.

Most importantly, what is often missing from the nuclear debate is the fact that the United States is the only power to have ever used nuclear weapons (aside from testing), when it dropped atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Nagasaki and Hiroshima in 1945, with horrific and devastating loss of life. Therefore, for postcolonial scholars such as Shampa Biswas (2014), the notion that some states can be trusted with nuclear weapons while others cannot because they are less developed, less mature in their approach to human life, or less rational is a racialized discourse.

In debates such as these, postcolonialism asks not who can be trusted with such weapons, but rather *who determines who can be trusted – and why?* Simply looking at the competition between states to accrue nuclear weapons will not tell us enough about the workings of power in international relations.

Such as how a nuclear arms race is underpinned by the power of some states to construct other states so that they are deemed not capable of having any such weapons at all. As with all theories of IR, there are internal debates among postcolonial scholars and in this case also a significant overlap with feminism – especially ‘third wave’ feminism that became prominent in the 1990s. bell hooks (2000) observed that the so-called ‘second wave’ of feminism of the mid-to-



late twentieth century had emerged from women in a position of privilege and did not represent African American women such as herself who remain on the margins of society, politics, and the economy.

She called for an alternative, critical, and distinctive feminist activism and politics. For example, does a black woman from a poor neighbourhood on Chicago's south side experience sexism in the same way as a white woman from its wealthier suburbs? Women who share the same ethnic identity might experience sexism in different ways because of their class. The same might be true for women of colour and white women from the same social class.

Women of colour and white women in the United States experience 'heteropatriarchy' – a societal order marked by white male heterosexual domination – differently even if they come from the same social class. An illustration of how this works may be found in the video of Beyoncé's 'Lemonade' which not only draws on how sexism is filtered through this patriarchal order but also explores how race, gender, class, and sexuality are intimately intertwined in the history of black women.

The fact that some black women may be more privileged concerning class may not take away from their experience of racism. For this reason (and others), feminist postcolonial scholars (see Chowdhry and Nair 2002) call for more attention to the intersections of race and/or ethnicity, nationality, class, *and* gender.

By doing so they address the ways that different aspects of one's identity, such as race, gender, class, sexuality, and so forth, intersect to create multiple and distinct forms of oppression so that no one aspect can be privileged over another in understanding oppression. Instead, various identities must all be understood as intersecting in producing one's experience of oppression.

This idea of 'intersectionality' is central to third-wave feminist approaches. Postcolonial feminists share a desire to go beyond simply analysing the impacts of patriarchy, gender inequality, and sexual exploitation. Instead, they highlight the need to fight not only patriarchy (broadly understood as the power of men over women) but also the classism and racism that privileges white women over women of colour. They question the idea of universal solidarity in women's

movements, arguing that the struggle against patriarchy as well as social inequality must be situated concerning racial, ethnic, and sexual privilege.

For example, while Western feminism has often portrayed the veil as a symbol of the oppression of women, many Algerian women adopted the veil, standing alongside men, when protesting French rule. To them, it was a symbol of opposition to white, colonial patriarchy. In many other parts of the colonized world, women stood shoulder to shoulder with men in nationalist movements to overthrow colonial rule, showing that women in different cultural, social, and political contexts experience oppression in very different ways.

Postcolonial feminists are committed to an intersectional approach that uncovers the deeper implications of how and why systemic violence evident in war, conflict, terror, poverty, social inequality, and so forth has taken root. Understanding power thus requires paying attention to these intersections. How they embedded in the issue at hand. Post-colonial feminism asserts that women of colour are oppressed due to their race/ethnicity, class status, and gender.

An example is found in the employment conditions of the many women in the Global South who work in factories producing textiles, semiconductors, and sporting and consumer goods for export to the West. In one such factory in Thailand, the Kader Toy Factory, a fire in 1993 killed 220 female factory workers and seriously injured over 500 more.

The doors to the building were locked at the time of the fire. The tragedy revealed the exploitation and deplorable working conditions of these women, who were employed by local contractors of American companies to make toys and stuffed animals for sale in Western markets. Despite decades of such abuses, there was little attention given to the conditions in these factories, or to the tragedy of the fire, in the mainstream Western media.

One opinion piece captured the shocking disregard for these women's lives. These executives know that their profits come from the toil of the young and the wretched in the Far East; they can live with that – live well. But they do not want to talk about dead women and girls stacked in the factory yard like so much rubbish, their bodies eventually be carted away like any other

industrial debris. In another tragedy, the Rana Plaza – a garment factory in Dhaka, Bangladesh – collapsed, killing 1,135 garment workers, mostly women.

It threw a spotlight on the workings of the global garment industry. Popular Western clothing lines profit from low wages, exploitation, and sweatshop conditions by producing their clothes in countries with lax building codes and regulations and non-existent (or inadequate) labour standards. The clothing lines do not then hold the factories to account for working conditions or safety. Postcolonial scholars argue that the deeply exploitative conditions and the disregard for the safety of these workers show that lesser value is described to brown bodies compared to white ones.

While there was much more coverage of this industrial accident in the Western media and the brands whose clothing was made at the Rana Plaza and suffered some momentary bad publicity, there has been little sustained effort to right the wrongs in the operations of multinational firms. The quest for the highest possible profit margins forces developing countries into a ‘race to the bottom’ in which they compete to have the cheapest labour and production costs to attract investment from multinational corporations.

The results are low wages, exploitation, and low safety standards. Post-colonial scholarship explains the failure to change these conditions by exposing how race, class, and gender come together to obscure the plight of these workers, meaning that the factory overseers, like the owners of the Rana Plaza and Kader operations, are not held accountable until tragedy strikes.

Even when they are held accountable, the punishment does not extend to the Western corporations further up the chain who sub-contract the task of exploiting workers – and ultimately killing some of them in these cases. It is almost impossible to imagine that a tragedy of a similar scale in a Western state would prompt so little action against those responsible or allow the conditions that caused it to continue virtually unchecked.

Post-colonialism interrogates a world order dominated by major state actors and their domineering interests and ways of looking at the world. It challenges notions that taken hold about

the way states act or behave - what motivates them. It forces us to ask tough questions about how and why a hierarchical international order has emerged.

It further challenges mainstream IR's core assumptions about concepts such as power and how it operates. Post-colonialism forces us to reckon with the everyday injustices and oppressions that can reveal themselves in the starkest terms through a particular moment of crisis. Whether it has to do with the threat of nuclear weapons or the deaths of workers in factories churning out goods for Western markets, post-colonialism asks us to analyse these issues from the perspectives of those who lack power. While post-colonialism shares some common ground with other critical theories in this regard, it also offers a distinctive approach.

It brings together a deep concern with histories of colonialism and imperialism, how these are carried through to the present – and how inequalities and oppressions embedded in race, class, and gender relations on a global scale matter for our understanding of international relations. By paying close attention to how these aspects of the global play out in specific contexts, post-colonialism gives us an important and alternative conceptual lens that provides us with a different set of theoretical tools to unpack the complexities of this world.

### **CHAPTER III**

#### **GENTLE RISE OF COLONIZERS**

Initially, the European continent was conquered by Celtic tribes, Normans, Anglo-Saxons, and Jutes. Later, it started growing gently. It started to conquer other countries in the west and the east side of the Earth. They went to other countries just for trading, but they noticed that the people of other countries like India, and Africa were filled with superstitious beliefs and there was no unity among them. This made the colonizers very easy to conquer them.

People in Europe need luxurious things like silk clothes, elephant horns, and beauty products like sandalwood, teak wood, etc. All the luxurious things are in Asian and African countries. Many scientific inventions came. This is how the Renaissance came in Europe countries. Not only luxurious things but also needed resources like gold, metals, etc., Some of the colonizers came to spread their culture in other countries. They think of themselves as God's slaves or the man sent by God.

When they visited India there was a rule of the Ottoman sultan. Hence there was an impact of Islamism in India. Also, the Ottoman sultan made a lot of rules and regulations he was the only one to interrupt the colonizer's trade with the natives. They decided to banish Islamism and the Ottoman sultan from their way of mission.

Venice and Genoa had a wish to regain the Ottoman sultan. Hence, they decided to defeat the Ottoman Sultan in Economic development. Portugal is the head of all Christian Countries. Portugal aims to spread Christianity and disappear the Islamic religion. Spain and Portugal Signed a treaty called the Treaty of Tordesillas. This treaty mainly focuses on spreading Christianity in Eastern countries and Western countries. They started it from the Atlantic Ocean

Britain uses their technology and military power all over the world which dominates the economic background of the world. The British Empire was considered as 'Great Britain' because, it conquered territories, and colonies and made itself a protectorate under the direct and indirect administration.

In 1487, Bartholomew Dias was the one who got some success in the first Voyager. He came to South Africa's corner, and he couldn't go further. He returned because he could not go further due to storms, so he named it the 'Cape of Storms.' John-II gave 'Cape of Good Hope' for South Africa. After ten years Vasco-da-Gama started his Voyage in 1497. He came to South Africa. During his arrival in South Africa, there were heavy storms, and he stayed in South Africa. This is the first note we see of the arrival of Colonizers into Africa. Initially, they pretended to have a friendly relationship, and they came to know the weakness of the natives and they started to dominate them.

During the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Britain became more widespread because it explored the parts of many countries. The beginning of Europe arrived in other countries in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. They explore other countries for trading and to expand their Christianity. The discovery of the Americas was in 1492. With the power of Europe, the British also ventured into colonialism. They started to colonize first in North America. The Americans got independence from the colonies in 1776 except for Canada.

British started focusing on Africa and Asia. In 1788, an association was formed in London, and they encouraged exploring Africa. The British reached the Cape colony in South Africa. Many Britishers started to explore Africa's interior places along the Niger river. They captured

Africa through their superstitious belief and low education.

In Asia, the East India Company led the foray into colonial ventures. Through the battles of Plassey and the Battle of Buxar, the East India Company began a gradual takeover of the Indian subcontinent. By the end of the Carnatic Wars, they had complete control of the Indian subcontinent by the beginning of the 1800s.

Then there were battles conducted by sepoy. It's called as Sepoy Mutiny or the Great Revolt of 1857. The East Indian Company was dissolved and control passed directly to the British Crown. Along with controlling India, the British established colonies in Southeast Asia in the 18th and 19th centuries. One of the earliest was Singapore on the tip of the Malay peninsula, which came under British control in 1819. By 1896 the Malay states had formed a federation under British advisors, effectively making it a protectorate.

In 1824, the British invaded Burma in response to Burmese expeditions in Northeast India. The Burmese resisted British efforts of colonization through a series of three wars before being finally defeated in 1885 and Britain took much control over the country. When we see in the novel the village of Umuofia has many superstitious beliefs where they believe in the spirits. Hence, they had given their forest to colonizers to build the church. This was the first move of colonizers to enter the native's place.

The inland Africa in the middle decades of the nineteenth century, advances in treating deadly diseases like malaria, etc – meant that the European powers could finally move inland from the well-established coastal colonies. But this would require costly wars against the native population. So, they reached a political settlement where they divided the territory of Africa within themselves with no regard for the wishes of the indigenous people of these lands.

In African societies, lucky charms take different forms, each representing different aspects of life. For example, People often wear the ancient Egyptian symbol, the eye of Horus, as a necklace or bracelet to guard against the evil eye and attract good fortune.

Likewise, elephant figurines or trinkets are favoured lucky charms due to elephants admired wisdom and strength. One well-known African lucky charm is the African juju. These small bags contain various items like herbs, animal bones, or personal tokens and are believed to possess strong spiritual properties. People wear juju around their necks or tie it to bracelets for protection and good luck.

## CHAPTER IV

### RIGID IGBO CULTURE LEADS TO THE FALL OF NATIVES

The main theme of this novel is Ignorance and Prejudice of European Colonizers. The Author Chinua Achebe wrote the novel *Things Fall Apart* by giving an apt response to the Novel *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad, which depicts African's as unintelligent tribes without culture.

Throughout the entire novel, he illustrates the rich culture of Igbo society. In the final chapter, we can see the District Commissioner's prejudice and Ignorance. He lacked concern for Okonkwo's death. Therefore, this reveals the prejudiced views among Europeans. The conclusion of this novel *Things Fall Apart* is a confrontation between Igbo cultural life and Western missionary's new religion.

This Western missionary interrupted the religious culture of the Igbo, which laments the sufferings of the ancestors of the Igbo. The colonial officers were there to stop their cultural ceremony. Here, the protagonist of this novel Okonkwo pulled his machete to fight against the Western missionaries, which ended a tragic end for Okonkwo. He was driven by Inner terror of great failure also; he was the greater warrior in the tribe.

Most of the events presented in the novel are fictional. Here, the Author of *Things Fall Apart* used the concept of the spiritual history of the Africans. The missionaries who occupied Umuofia deteriorated their economy, religious, Judicial, and social systems. This paper analyses that the novel is a severe criticism of the terms of Imperialism and post-colonial theory. In addition, the author explained the inequalities of gender where women are treated as others.

Tradition always plays a very important role in shaping our identity and it provides a sense of belonging. It should pass from one generation to another generation, which enriches the cultural values, beliefs, and practices. Achebe's works mostly depict the conflicts between tradition and modernity. He highlights the consequences of abandoning one's roots.

Through Okonkwo, he showed that tradition is not just a relic of the past, but it shapes our present and future. The tradition is powerful because of exploring through stories. Achebe always remembers giving importance to cultural heritage and it passes from one generation to another generation. He played a crucial role in shaping the literary landscape of his continent, Africa. This

novel deals with Chaos, confusion, and the collapse of Igbo culture.

The natives suffered because whites arrived in Umuofia bringing their religion. The white missionaries could not accept Igbo culture. The missionaries tried to change Igbo culture, which the natives felt unacceptable and inappropriate. Igbo culture was quite like Europe. Some social constraints are made more comparable with both cultures. The rights of Women were very small in Igbo culture, whereas in Europe also it was the condition of the women. The men always decided on the marriage proposals because the marriage was a formal ritual.

They had a tradition of telling stories with the strangers they met, and they used to offer Kola nuts. In addition, Igbo people had faith in the supreme power of the God. Like Europe, they also had theological beliefs of God's messenger coming as God's representative or God's Servant. They believed that strong persons were worthy to be helped by God. Igbo Society was Conservative, and they did not have strong willpower. It could be construed that they were less ambitious but European Society was liberal, they were power-thirsty, and materialistic. These are some of the similarities of those cultures.

The family cultures of the Igbo and Europeans were different. In IGBO culture, they practiced polygamy; they never practiced (or) allowed polyandry. Polygamy means the male can marry more than one wife whereas; polyandry means the women marry more than one male. But European society follows the effectiveness of monogamy.

Therefore, this culture may be followed because of the bible of Christianity and the normative derivation of this practice. In this novel, Men normally marry many wives and have many children in their Igbo culture. On the other hand, Okonkwo is the protagonist of the novel, and he has three wives. In Igbo culture, men always own only their children, not their wives.

Then emotions are the weakest point in Igbo culture. Here most of the men were warriors. In Igbo, lethargic people don't have any respect, and they are disliked. The bride should always pay a unique ritual to the groom's family before their marriage. The groom wants to present a gift to other clans to make them impressed.

They have a unique pattern in education. They had less formal education system hence the clan was filled with superstitious beliefs. Such belief was women faced difficulties in giving birth to a baby. In the actual world, it is seen as a boon that too when it was twin it was celebrated. But in the Igbo clan, they assume that a child is a cursed child, and the birth of a twin baby is considered



a sign of Evil. They dispose of those twin children because they believe that it may cause bad things to the clan. This article tries to explain the reconstruction of the role of women the ill-treatment given to women the discrimination faced by women in societies like Igbo, which it exists all over the world.

Achebe adhered to the Igbo society's cultural heritage with its goodness. This novel found many nuances and vivid references as well and it had a view of marginalizing the role, status, and position of women.

Like Europe, the Igbo society also has a system of ruling by the father in the family. The male is the dominant (or) head of the family as well as in society. According to Igbo's belief, Women do not have any authority to take up their family (or) society. They do not have the right to interfere in public matters (like social, political, or economic matters) and their private matters.

According to Igbo society, man can handle all matters without the help of a woman. Women must agree with the opinion of the man's decision even if it is a wrong aspect. These are the facts that are shown in the novel. In this story *Things Fall Apart*, Chinua Achebe shows the good view of the Igbo as well as the bad view of their culture. Their good view does not show their exclusive Identity rather their Bad view does not make them alien to them.

Obierika warns Nwankwo against the culprits. He said the story, which is a simple story about it, makes us wiser. When a man went to the market to sell a Goat, hence he tied it on a thick rope and tied the thick rope to his wrist. Later he realizes that he carried Goad but a heavy log of wood. This simple story tells us a lot.

Achebe does not show only the follies of the Igbo culture. The Igbo culture also has some merits in their practice. He exposed the realities of the Igbo societies. Sengupta says that the African societies take up their own contradictions and spiritual beliefs. They don't consider the colonial advent. The Igbo society believes in "Igbo". Igbo is nothing but a spiritual disorder. In the same chapter, the reader can see a reference to a buzzing of mosquitoes in Okonkwo's ear. Achebe asserts doubt about these two incidents.

Ezinma's fever could be malaria. According to Igbo society, it is "Igbo contiguous". Achebe ironically used the mosquito as the reason for Ezinma's fever, not their belief called "Igbo". The role of women in Igbo society is only in the domestic atmosphere. They should take care of the children and maintain the household. They were not treated equally to men and not

given equal opportunities like men on the grounds of education and leadership positions. Women do not have their own identity. They were called mothers wives or daughters of patriarchal society.

In this novel, the European countries started to be conquered by the native's superstitious beliefs. The protagonist of the novel Okonkwo was greatly affected by the trauma that his father Unoka was a debtor and was very lazy in his work. Okonkwo decided that he should not be like his father. Okonkwo thinks that his father was an unsuccessful person. He showed his masculinity in every work.

In addition, Okonkwo is a confused character, and he shows his masculinity to everyone. Here, is the incident where he beats his second wife to show his masculine power just for normal matters.

*'Who killed this banana tree? He asked. A hush fell on the compound immediately. Who killed this tree? Or are you all deaf and dumb? Okonkwo's second wife had merely cut a few leaves off it to wrap some food, she said so. Without further argument, Okonkwo gave her a sound beating and left her and her only daughter weeping.'* (TFA – 28)

He treated women in a wrong manner as well as he showed his good version among women this is proved by his daughter's incident where he thinks that Ezinma might be a boy. *'She should have been a boy,' he thought as he looked at his ten-year-old daughter. 'She should have been a boy,' Okonkwo said to himself again.* (TFA – 46,47)

The other superstitious belief of Igbo culture is children are warned not to whistle at night because of evil spirits. Sometimes, they should not call the name of the snake at nighttime because the snake may hear it. So, this is called a string. *'When the moon is shining the cripple becomes hungry for a walk'.* (TFA – 8). These are some of the tales of the Igbo where it makes the children of the natives fall into wrong illusions. This made those natives fall of their culture.

## CHAPTER V

### THE CONCLUSION

This research paper concludes with the theory of post-colonial perspective. Every colonized country was civilized in their way. British dominated the colonized countries on the grounds of political, economic, and cultural matters. No country in the world is fully independent. Other countries are mentally dependent on the colonized countries. The European countries came here to loot resources and to dominate the natives in their native land.

Even today, the British occupied other countries mentally through their language and

culture. Most of the countries had lost their culture and language like in the novel *Things Fall Apart*. The best example of this is Nwoye who lost his culture. He forgets about his culture and goes behind Christianity.

The novel *Things Fall Apart* ended with two tragedies. The first tragedy is Okonkwo's death. The second tragedy of the novel is the loss of the Great Wrestler Okonkwo's history. He is an example of a tragic hero whose fight with society ends in vain. In the last chapter, the District Commissioner threatens to erase the specificity of Okonkwo's tragedy by removing the events from their context and simplifying them into a tale meant to entertain his readers: "*The story of this man who had killed a messenger and hanged himself would make interesting reading.*"

The sadness in the novel is the natives had superstitious beliefs from the beginning to the end. Because of this superstitious belief, the colonizers grasped the attention. They converted many natives into their culture. The superstition makes the person weak. This makes their mission very easy. Okonkwo died on his own rather than facing humiliation in the colonizer's hands.

In *Things Fall Apart* the novel is divided into three parts that show the decline of Okonkwo's fame.

In the first part, Okonkwo was in a high position. In the second part, he was exiled from his village members for his mistake. In the third part, he lost all his fame, and he suicide. This justifies the title things fall apart. In addition, The Things Fall Apart shows that the culture of the Igbo declined from high to low. These things falling apart not only the fall of Igbo culture, but it also indicates the entire world of countries which are colonized by the British.

Okonkwo had a great tragic ending in the last two chapters where his entire fame was lost in front of him. His dead body is also not done in a proper funeral. They were taken by the white missionaries. Even though the Igbo had lost the great wrestler still they were stuck in the superstitious belief which made them fall of their culture. The white Europeans then cut down Okonkwo's corpse and he is buried like a dog in the Evil Forest.

Another theme of the novel is the inability to change from their adaptation. The adaptation of changes leads to one's downfall where Okonkwo cannot tolerate his failure, and he hangs himself. He is racist, and condescending, and describes the villagers as uncivilized and in need of pacification. The gravity of Okonkwo's suicide is lost on him, which makes the act even more tragic.

Another central theme is reputation. Okonkwo's society places a great deal of emphasis on a person's reputation. Being shamed is a big deal, and that is one reason why Okonkwo works tirelessly. He's trying to undo the reputation that his father had. Unfortunately, Okonkwo goes overboard, and his reputation is still damaged.

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  - Covers how Achebe incorporates oral tradition and Igbo storytelling into his writing.

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8. **Encyclopedia Britannica – "Igbo People"**
  - <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Igbo>
  - Offers a concise overview of Igbo culture, religion, language, and history.

## 9. JSTOR or Google Scholar

- Search terms: “Igbo culture in Things Fall Apart”, “Achebe and colonialism”, “Gender roles in Igbo society” for peer-reviewed papers.

## The Role of Joint Attention in Early Language Development in Autism spectrum Disorder (ASD)

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### Abstract

Joint attention, the ability to coordinate attention with a social partner toward a shared object or event, is a foundational social-communicative skill that strongly predicts language outcomes in early childhood. In autism spectrum disorder (ASD), differences in initiating and responding to joint attention (IJA, RJA) and joint engagement with caregivers are among the earliest observable signs and are robustly associated with later expressive and receptive language. This paper synthesizes theoretical frameworks and empirical evidence linking joint attention to language development in ASD, reviews assessment measures, summarizes intervention effects (including caregiver-mediated and preschool-based randomized trials), and highlights implications for clinical practice and research. We conclude with recommendations for culturally responsive assessment, longitudinal designs, and mechanism-focused intervention research.

**Keywords:** Autism spectrum disorder (ASD), joint attention, joint engagement, initiating joint attention (IJA), responding to joint attention (RJA)

### Introduction

Language development in ASD is notably heterogeneous, but converging evidence identifies Joint attention as a critical precursor and predictor of language growth. Joint attention is typically defined as the capacity to share attention to a referent with awareness of mutuality, supported by

behaviors such as gaze alternation, pointing, and showing (Bakeman & Adamson, 1984; Mundy & Newell, 2007). In autistic toddlers, attenuated or atypical joint attention is detectable by the second year of life and is strongly associated with later spoken language and communicative competence. Understanding how joint attention supports language provides an actionable target for early identification and intervention.

Research suggests that children with ASD exhibit reduced frequency and quality of joint attention behaviors such as pointing, gaze alternation, and showing objects. These differences hinder opportunities for language input during everyday interactions, thereby contributing to long-term difficulties in expressive and receptive language.

Joint attention is widely recognized as a cornerstone of early social communication and language development. It refers to the shared focus of two individuals on an object or event, coordinated through gaze, gestures, or verbal cues. Research suggests that joint attention is not a unitary construct but comprises multiple interrelated components that contribute uniquely to developmental outcomes.

### **Joint Attention Core Constructs**

One essential component is Responding to Joint Attention (RJA). RJA refers to the ability of a child to follow another's attentional cues, such as gaze direction or pointing, in order to establish shared focus. For example, when a caregiver points to a toy and the child shifts gaze to the toy, the child is engaging in RJA. This ability provides the foundation for learning from others and has been consistently associated with receptive language growth (Mundy, Sigman, & Kasari, 1990; Mundy & Gomes, 1998).

Complementing this is Initiating Joint Attention (IJA), which reflects the child's spontaneous efforts to direct another person's attention toward an object, event, or experience for the purpose of sharing, rather than requesting. A child pointing to an airplane in the sky while alternating gaze between the plane and the caregiver exemplifies IJA. Importantly, IJA has been shown to predict expressive language development and pragmatic communication skills, underscoring its role in language acquisition (Carpenter, Nagell, & Tomasello, 1998; Mundy & Gomes, 1998).

Closely related is the construct of Joint Engagement (JE), which involves sustained shared interaction between a child and a partner around a common object or event. Joint engagement can

be *supported*, where the caregiver scaffolds the interaction while the child attends to the object, or *coordinated*, where the child actively acknowledges and aligns attention with the caregiver during the activity. Both forms create optimal contexts for social learning, vocabulary building, and the development of communication strategies (Bakeman & Adamson, 1984; Adamson, Bakeman, & Deckner, 2004).

At a higher level of complexity lies Shared Intentionality, which captures the motivation and ability to share experiences, emotions, and intentions with others. Unlike simple attention following, shared intentionality highlights the social-cognitive foundation of joint attention. For instance, a child may bring a toy to a parent not to seek assistance but to share excitement, demonstrating the intrinsically social nature of the act. This higher-level construct emphasizes the role of joint attention in establishing meaningful interpersonal connections and shaping communicative competence (Tomasello, Carpenter, Call, Behne, & Moll, 2005).

Taken together, these constructs—responding to joint attention, initiating joint attention, joint engagement, and shared intentionality—illustrate the multifaceted nature of joint attention and its central role in social communication development. Examining these processes is particularly significant in the context of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), where difficulties in joint attention are among the earliest and most consistent indicators of atypical development (Mundy et al., 1990; Charman, 2003). As shown in Figure 1, joint attention progresses from responding to shared intentionality

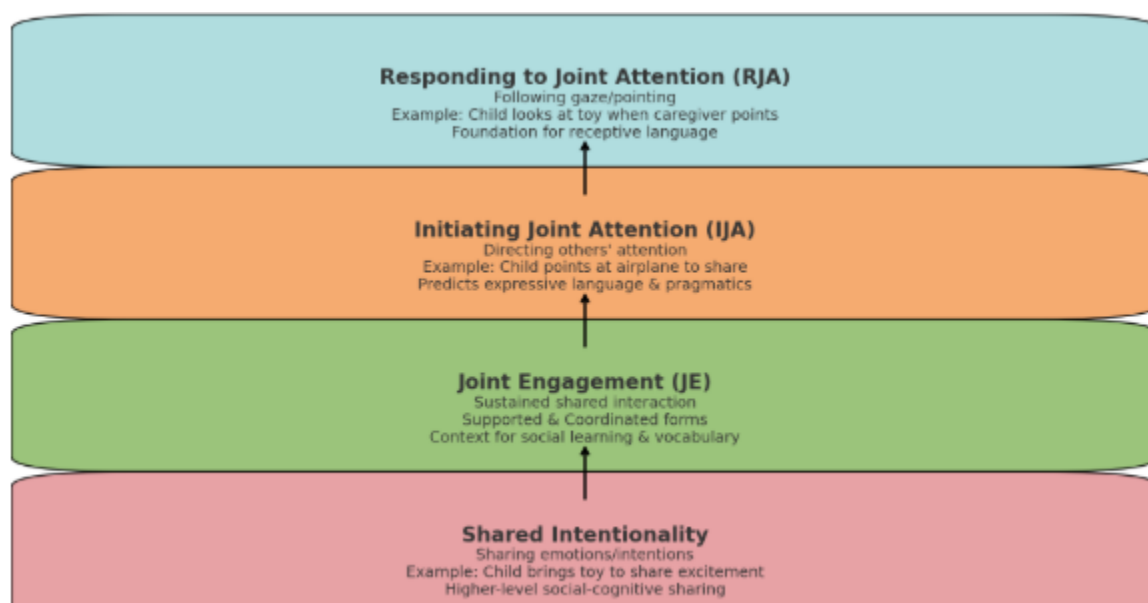




Figure 1: Developmental progression of the joint attention construct.

### **Theoretical Links to Language**

Researchers have long emphasized the critical role of joint attention in shaping language development, proposing two major pathways through which this relationship unfolds.

The first is the social–pragmatic pathway, which highlights the role of joint attention in structuring episodes of semantically rich and contingent caregiver input. When caregivers align their talk with the child’s current focus of attention—commonly termed *follow-in talk*—children are more likely to learn and retain new words because linguistic input is both contextually relevant and pragmatically meaningful (Tomasello & Farrar, 1986; Tomasello, 2003). In these interactions, children not only gain vocabulary but also begin to understand communicative intent, thereby laying the foundation for pragmatic language competence (Carpenter, Nagell, & Tomasello, 1998). Empirical studies have demonstrated that children who engage more frequently in joint attention episodes with caregivers show faster vocabulary growth and earlier acquisition of grammatical structures (Mundy & Gomes, 1998; Carpenter et al., 1998). This underscores the role of JA as a scaffold for the social use of language.

The second is the cognitive–attentional pathway, which emphasizes the attentional and representational demands of Joint attention. Joint attention requires children to flexibly shift gaze between a social partner and an object or event, a skill that supports referential mapping, the ability to link words with their intended referents (Mundy & Newell, 2007). Through these processes, children become adept at assigning words to objects and events with increasing efficiency, thus accelerating vocabulary expansion (Mundy et al., 1990). Moreover, joint attention fosters attentional control, which facilitates the generalization of word meanings across different contexts, supporting both semantic and syntactic growth (Charman, 2003).

Taken together, these two pathways—social–pragmatic and cognitive–attentional—illustrate how Joint attention provides both an interactive context for rich linguistic input and a cognitive mechanism for efficient word–referent mapping. This dual function positions joint attention as a central bridge between early social interaction and the emergence of linguistic competence.

### **Developmental Trajectory and ASD**

In typical development, the trajectory of joint attention unfolds in a predictable sequence.

Responding to Joint Attention (RJA) generally emerges between 6–9 months, as infants begin to reliably follow another’s gaze or pointing gestures (Carpenter, Nagell, & Tomasello, 1998). By around 9–12 months, Initiating Joint Attention (IJA) becomes increasingly evident, as children begin to use gestures, gaze alternation, and vocalizations to direct others’ attention for the purpose of sharing experiences (Mundy & Newell, 2007). Through the second year of life, both RJA and IJA expand rapidly and are integrated into broader social-communicative skills, providing a foundation for symbolic play, vocabulary growth, and grammatical development (Bakeman & Adamson, 1984; Tomasello, 1995).

In children with ASD, however, this developmental trajectory is often altered. Difficulties in both coordinated joint attention and joint engagement are frequently observed, with significant delays or reductions in the spontaneous use of IJA behaviours such as pointing or showing objects (Mundy, Sigman, & Kasari, 1990; Charman, 2003). These difficulties are not simply delays but often represent qualitative differences in how attention is shared. Research consistently shows that impairments in IJA are among the most reliable early markers of ASD and are strongly predictive of later language and social outcomes (Adamson et al., 2009, 2017; Mundy & Newell, 2007).

Longitudinal evidence further underscores the significance of Joint attention for language development. For example, children who demonstrate stronger Joint attention skills in infancy tend to exhibit larger expressive vocabularies, greater mean length of utterance (MLU), and more advanced pragmatic communication abilities in preschool and early school years (Brooks & Meltzoff, 2005; Siller & Sigman, 2002; Mundy et al., 2007). Conversely, persistent joint attention deficits in ASD are associated with restricted opportunities for socially mediated learning, leading to slower language acquisition and challenges in conversational competence (Chawarska, Klin, & Volkmar, 2003).

Taken together, these findings indicate that joint attention serves as a developmental bridge between early nonverbal social interactions and later language and communication outcomes. In ASD, disruptions in this trajectory help explain both the variability and the specificity of language delays observed across individuals.

Meta-analytic evidence indicates robust associations between joint attention (both IJA and RJA) and language outcomes in ASD and typical development, with IJA often showing stronger links to expressive language growth. Reviews of early intervention suggest that programs

explicitly training joint attention yield moderate improvements in joint attention and downstream gains in language for many children, particularly when embedded in naturalistic, caregiver-implemented contexts.

### **Review of Literature**

Research has consistently shown that joint attention (JA) and joint engagement (JE) play a pivotal role in predicting later language outcomes in children with ASD. Observational and longitudinal studies reveal that children with ASD often demonstrate persistent deficits in coordinated JA, marked by difficulties in sustaining shared attention with a partner across people and objects. Adamson, Bakeman, and Deckner (2009) found that both the quantity and quality of JE episodes during early social interactions predicted later expressive vocabulary and syntactic skills. Extending these findings, Adamson et al. (2017) showed that children who engaged in sustained, coordinated JA in early childhood demonstrated more favourable trajectories of expressive language development, highlighting the predictive power of early JA and JE.

Classic developmental research provides the theoretical grounding for these observations. Bakeman and Adamson (1984) emphasized the importance of triadic coordination—where the child, caregiver, and object are integrated into an interaction—as a crucible for referential communication and word learning. Similarly, Bruner (1975,1983) highlighted how joint routines and formats scaffold children’s entry into meaningful communication. These frameworks underscore why disruptions in coordinated attention in ASD can lead to cascading effects on vocabulary acquisition and syntactic growth.

More recent evidence has strengthened and refined these conclusions. A cross-lagged longitudinal study demonstrated that higher levels of supported and coordinated joint engagement not only predicted reductions in autistic symptom severity over time but also showed reciprocal effects, with language gains enhancing subsequent joint engagement complexity (Adamson et al., 2020). A systematic review and meta-regression by Pickles et al. (2024) further synthesized longitudinal findings, confirming that early joint attention skills—particularly responding to joint attention (RJA)—show medium, reliable associations with later expressive vocabulary and syntactic development. Importantly, this review highlighted how differences in measurement contexts (structured vs. naturalistic tasks) contribute to variability across studies.

Naturalistic research has also shown that caregiver input is most effective when embedded

in JE. For example, caregiver labeling of objects during coordinated JE episodes predicts stronger vocabulary growth than labeling outside JE contexts, in both ASD and typically developing populations (Salley et al., 2023; Yu & Smith, 2017). This finding supports Bruner's notion that triadic coordination is the bedrock for mapping words onto referents. Complementary evidence from eye-tracking studies indicates that toddlers with ASD allocate less visual attention to JA-relevant cues, and those who attend more to these cues show stronger subsequent cognitive and language development (Kikuchi et al., 2023).

Finally, longitudinal intervention research provides causal leverage for these associations. Caregiver-mediated naturalistic developmental behavioral interventions (NDBIs) that emphasize JE strategies (e.g., modeling, responsive scaffolding, shared routines) have been shown to improve JA and JE skills, which in turn mediate gains in expressive language (Schreibman et al., 2015; Bottema-Beutel et al., 2014). Meta-analytic evidence further confirms that early interventions explicitly targeting JA produce reliable improvements in RJA and IJA, with several studies linking these gains to subsequent language growth (Murza et al., 2016). Together, these findings converge to demonstrate that coordinated JA and JE not only predict but also causally contribute to language development trajectories in ASD.

Caregiver-mediated JE/JA interventions demonstrate significant gains in joint engagement immediately post-treatment and at follow-up, with associated improvements in communication (Kasari et al., 2014). Preschool-based JA & symbolic play interventions show specific and generalized effects on JA and functional language use with later follow-ups indicating benefits for spoken language when JA/play were targeted (Kasari et al., 2014).

### **Implementation Considerations**

In intervention, it is generally more effective to begin with RJA skills (e.g., following another person's gaze, responding to a point, or shifting attention when prompted) because these behaviors are often easier for children with ASD to acquire and require less initiation on their part. Once children develop the ability to consistently respond to others' bids for attention, clinicians and caregivers can then scaffold IJA behaviors (e.g., pointing, showing, or shifting gaze to initiate shared attention). Building IJA is particularly important for fostering spontaneous communication and social reciprocity, as these skills are strongly associated with later expressive language development.

Prioritize quality and duration of Joint Engagement (JE) episodes over mere frequency.

While frequency of JA/JE behaviors is important, the depth and length of engagement episodes often provide more meaningful opportunities for language and social learning. For example, a longer, high-quality episode of shared play (sustained attention to objects/people, mutual turn-taking, emotionally positive interaction) allows for repeated practice of communication strategies and vocabulary in a naturalistic context. Focusing on duration also reflects a child's capacity for sustained social attention, which is crucial for generalization of language skills into everyday settings.

Leverage Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) within Joint Attention contexts.

For minimally verbal or nonverbal children, embedding AAC strategies—such as picture exchange systems, communication boards, into Joint Attention activities can significantly enhance communication. For example, during a shared book-reading activity, a child can use a device to label pictures or request a turn. Importantly, AAC use within JA contexts supports both functional communication and social reciprocity, rather than treating communication in isolation. This dual focus helps children use communication as a tool for connection, not just requesting.

Monitor fidelity and coach for generalization across caregivers, settings, and partners.

Effective implementation requires caregiver training and fidelity monitoring. If caregivers, educators, or peers are not consistent in how they create and respond to JA opportunities, children may struggle to transfer skills beyond therapy sessions. Coaching should focus on helping caregivers identify natural moments for JA (e.g., play, routines, mealtimes) and reinforce children's communicative bids. Additionally, embedding practice across different settings (home, school, community) and partners (parents, peers, teachers) ensures that JA skills are not context-bound but generalized, which is key to functional communication outcome.

## **Conclusion**

Joint attention and joint engagement are foundational mechanisms of language acquisition, linking early social interaction to later vocabulary, grammar, and pragmatic competence. In Autism Spectrum Disorder, disruptions in responding to and initiating joint attention constrain opportunities for language growth, but evidence shows these skills are malleable. Longitudinal studies identify joint attention as a strong predictor of later language, while intervention trials demonstrate that JA-focused strategies, especially within naturalistic caregiver–child contexts,

yield significant communication gains.

Taken together, these findings position joint attention as both an early screening marker and a tractable intervention target. Embedding JA-focused practices in early intervention frameworks can accelerate language development and foster broader social-communicative outcomes, underscoring its central role in evidence-based practice for children with ASD.

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## Dialectics of Darkness and Light: Deconstructing Ethical Ambivalence and Social Mobility Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger*

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### Abstract

Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger* challenges the illusion of upward mobility in modern India, laying bare the contradictions of economic advancement within a system rooted in inequality and corruption. Through Balram Halwai's ethically complex journey from servant to entrepreneur, the novel offers a pointed critique of capitalism, entrenched power dynamics, and the moral compromises demanded for survival. This paper examines the symbolic use of light and darkness, the inversion of conventional success stories, and the precarious nature of individual agency in a rigidly divided society. In exposing the false promise of meritocracy, Adiga delivers a disquieting vision of contemporary India."

**Keywords:** *The White Tiger*, social mobility, capitalism, corruption, power dynamics, class struggle, agency, ethical ambivalence.

### Introduction

Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger* presents a scathing critique of India's embedded socio-economic hierarchies, tearing apart the myth of meritocratic mobility within a structurally unequal country. Through Balram Halwai's morally compromised journey, embedded within dialectics of servitude and self-determination, the novel questions capitalism's exploitive machinery, which makes ethical transgression a necessary wage for upward ascent. The subversive narrative structure of the novel, which is presented as a confession before a Chinese Premier, further emphasizes the performative aspect of success within a meritocratic order that values ruthlessness over goodness.

In agreement with critics such as Kanishka Chowdhury, *The White Tiger* reconfigures the traditional paradigm of rags-to-riches within India's dystopian landscape of neoliberalism, wherein social ascendancy is inevitably coupled with moral concession (Chowdhury 84). This paper presents a deconstructive reading of Adiga's novel, unspooling its ethical ambivalence, systemic suppressions, and paradoxical agency within a strict analytical gaze with the following arguments.

### **The Dialectics of Light and Darkness**

Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger* skilfully crafts an elaborate tension between light and dark, as deep sociocultural and economic forces that support India's bifurcated society. Darkness, however, is more than an unlit void within Adiga's novel. Instead, it is an epistemological and existential chasm into which subaltern multitudes are cast, beset by institutionally cemented poverty, bondage, and systemic disempowerment. In contrast, light is freighted with associations of wealth, agency, and liberation, yet indiscriminate and often sullied by moral slide and ethical ambiguity. This complex dialect acts as a thematic rationale and an organizational refrain, underscoring Balram Halwai's personal journey from the suffocating nadir of Laxmangarh's poverty to what is supposedly luminous entrepreneurial prosperity in Bangalore.

Critic Priyamvada Gopal explains that *The White Tiger* "creates a world wherein darkness is neither a geographical nor a corporeal space, yet a psychological and ideological place, reaffirming hegemonic formations that prescribe economic immobility" (Gopal 121). Balram, who hails from such a darkness, is representative of the "other India," a world of poverty where generations of bondage are accepted and autonomous choice is an unaffordable extravagance. His move into the light, however, is not one of ethical integrity but of cold destruction of traditional morality. The epistolary structure, presented by a confession to the Chinese premier, reverses the traditional narrative of success by rendering the elevation of the protagonist a product of calculated violation and not meritocratic ascent.

All throughout the novel, Adiga uses chiaroscuro imagery to support this thematic opposition. The village of Laxmangarh is constantly referred to with that are essentially, if not literally, mortuary. Balram refers to it throughout the novel as a place where men "live like animals" (Adiga 21),

surrounded by darkness, both literal and metaphorical. Delhi, however, is alive with manmade luminescence, a world where “men with bellies” navigate a world of political and economic manipulations behind a façade of apparent progress (Adiga 35). And yet, even the light of the city is oppressive, clogging. Instead of enlightening, the city illuminates corruption, rather than virtue. According to Nandini Lal, “Delhi in *The White Tiger* is a paradoxical realm where light symbolizes exposure rather than enlightenment, serving as an indictment of the moral bankruptcy of its ruling class” (Lal 187).

Balram’s self-image is transformed radically through his navigation of this paradox. His self-designation, given by a schoolteacher who sees his concealed brain, makes him a “white tiger,” a precious anomaly among shadows, preordained to go beyond them (Adiga 30). This identification is foreshadowing his future breakage from the deterministic path of slavery, is foreshadowing his final transformation into a predator, who accepts amorality as his survival tactic. The light that Balram strives for, then, is not a transcendental purity of goodness, but a space where ethics of the lower class are turned upside down; for him, “only a man who is ready to see his family destroyed- who will say no to them when they go asking-can break out of the coop” (Adiga 275).

The deeper tragedy of Adiga’s novel is that the move out of darkness into light is a move toward calculated amorality, and not toward ethical clarity. Critics Ulka Anjaria, for instance, argue that “Balram’s move from darkness into light does not end with traditional self-actualization, however, but is a dark commentary on the ethical vacuum which supports capitalist shifts of status and class within post-liberalization India” (Anjaria 73). The novel is therefore not putting forward light as a redemptive principle so much as an unwholesome space upon which success is based on ethical decay, urging readers to call into question the easy optimism of neoliberal individualism.

### **Ethical Ambivalence and the Justification of Crime**

Adiga’s novel subverts traditional moral frameworks by constructing a protagonist who rises to economic and societal prominence with a premeditated murder. When Balram Halwai dispatches his employer Ashok, he does more than commit a personal crime- he commits a symbolically charged act of class war, an insurrectionary challenge against India’s hierarchical socio-economic order. The novel therefore creates a profoundly uncomfortable moral universe in which traditional

ethical polarities- good and evil, loyalty and treachery, crime and justice- are made impossible. Far from situating Balram's actions within an understandable moral paradigm, Adiga questions the possibility of ethical absolutism, leaving readers struggling with the nuances of survival within a corrupt system that requires participation for advancement. In this sense, Balram is a paradigm of what philosopher Michel Foucault would call "the ethical subject," an individual whose morality is not governed by external moral codes of conduct, yet is fashioned within a particular socio-political context (Foucault 27). His crime is then a crime against Ashok, yet a calculated realignment within an overall capitalist order that values end over means. As critic Kanishka Chowdhury believes, "Balram's ethical ambivalence is representative of the postcolonial subaltern's inevitable confrontation with systemic violence; his killing of Ashok is less a betrayal on a personal level and is more an act of what Fanon outlines as a revolutionary violence needed to challenge dominating frameworks" (Chowdhury 54). This moral ambivalence is compounded by Balram's own account, which is free of remorse or existential pain. He does not carry the archetypal guilt for a crime, but sees it instead as an act of strategic expediency. "I had to kill him," he asserts with unflinching confidence, presenting his act less as a moral transgression than an unavoidable move toward liberation (Adiga 237). This calculated refusal of remorse is consonant with Nietzsche's descriptions of *Übermensch*, a being who lives beyond traditional morality to create his own ethical vision (Nietzsche 114). In Balram's world, righteousness is a luxury enjoyed only by those who are living in the "light" of privilege, while for others living in darkness, survival is a function of radically overhauling ethical conventions.

The novel's presentation of crime as a vehicle for upward mobility is consonant with Marxists' denunciations of capitalist ethics. As Terry Eagleton argues, "In a world where the ruling class is above the law, criminality is going to be the subaltern's way of challenging hegemony" (Eagleton 92). Balram's crime is therefore not an individual act of desperation, then, so much as an inevitability of a system, a condemnation of a world that denies legal avenues of ascent to the marginalized. Adiga does not, however, sentimentalize Balram's success. Instead, he makes it a necessary, if deeply uncomfortable, by-product of India's economic inequities. The reader is left with a disturbing question: if only symptomatically moving beyond systemic oppression involves resorting to violence, is it possible to unqualifiedly condemn?

Meenakshi Mukherjee is critical of *The White Tiger*, contending that it presents a dystopian vision of capitalist India, wherein morality is a conditional phenomenon, adjustable based on a perspective within society's socioeconomic hierarchy (Mukherjee 198). According to this interpretation, Balram's ethical ambiguity is not an exception but a symptom of a systemic rot wherein corruption has seeped into all strata of society. His metamorphosis into a callous businessman is representative of capitalist prosperity based on moral compromises, complementing Adiga's criticism of myth of meritocracy.

### **The Rooster Coop: A Metaphor for Social Entrapment**

Adiga's *The White Tiger* uses the searing metaphor of the "rooster coop" to encapsulate India's underclass entrapment and cyclical oppression, particularly that of India's relegated poor, who are destined for generations of subjugation. The metaphor of docile chickens quietly watching over their inevitable slaughter serves a powerful allegory for psychological conditioning and systemic coercion preventing India's lower classes from rising up against subjugation. In stark contrast with run-of-the-mill Marxist dialectics, which imply class struggle as an inexorable agent of social change, Adiga's is a far darker vision, a world in which economic coercion is internalized so deeply that it subliminally regulates itself. Far from actively resisting subjugation, India's lower classes unwittingly shore it up, guaranteeing a radically inequitable status quo.

Balram's account, which veers from mocking disdain to raw outrage, exposes mechanisms for entrapment. The poor are, he bemoans, still "invisible" to upper-class eyes, yet are simultaneously an essential part of that system's survival (Adiga 160). The rooster coop is emblematic, of course, of economic stratification, yet extends further into an epistemological critique of hegemonic processes of self-perpetuation. According to critic Ulka Anjaria, "the coop works simultaneously as a material and psychological device, wherein poor people are neither merely shackled by external coercion but are actively party to ongoing servitude through an inscribed fear of transgression" (Anjaria 87). This reading is an expression of Foucauldian theory of panoptic discipline, whereby subjects monitor themselves out of an omnipresent, internalized fear of punishment.

In addition, rooster coop is not merely an economic entrapment but an expression of a

comprehensive moral economy that values loyalty, subordination, and fatalistic resignation. Balram, for all his intelligence and repressed rebelliousness, is at first unable to envision a world outside of his familial reality. His change is therefore not so much a material climb but an epistemic break, an existential acknowledgment that if you want to flee the coop, first you must escape its ideological grip. The murder of Ashok is not so much a literal severing of master and servant relations as an allegorical assassination of psychological shackles that have held him back. As literary critic Kanishka Chowdhury argues, “Balram’s moment of violence is less an expression of personal malevolence than an indictment of a system where radical rupture is the only available avenue for agency” (Chowdhury 63).

Nonetheless, Adiga does not represent Balram’s flight as an unqualified victory; it is suffused, instead, with a deep moral ambiguity. The rooster coop is, after all, more than a jail, a building of societal solidarity. In breaking out, Balram essentially relinquishes all filial obligation, severing his relationship with his family and leaving them open to vengeance. This serves only to reinforce the novel’s general argument that systemic oppression is not essentially economic, but is instead relational—that the very buildings which support the poor are ones which also make revolt an act of radical personal sacrifice. In the end, *The White Tiger* does not mythologize Balram’s flight, but it discloses the hard mathematics of class ascent in a world where ethical imperatives are subordinated to survival’s imperatives.

### **Capitalism and Corruption: The Cost of Success**

Adiga’s vision of capitalism throughout *The White Tiger* is necessarily entangled with moral corruption, holding a bleak vision of economic advancement compatible only with participation in corruption, exploitation, and violence. The novel explicitly deconstructs the neoliberal fantasy of meritocracy, revealing that economic advancement within India’s capitalist economy is neither a function of innovation or hard work, but of calculated immorality. Balram’s path, from domestic servant to self-proclaimed businessman, is exemplary of that uncomfortable truth, according to which acquiring wealth requires an essential corrupting of ethical principle.

Critic Meenakshi Mukherjee observes that *The White Tiger* offers a depiction of capitalism driven not by open competition but by a deeply rooted alliance of political and economic corruption,

where success hinges on the ability to undermine—rather than work within—formal systems (Mukherjee 205). Balram's rise reflects this reality; his shift from obedient driver to ruthless entrepreneur is not a deviation but a natural outcome of a world that prizes deceit and punishes innocence.

Adiga's critique goes beyond personal misconduct, probing the wider moral consequences of capitalism. The novel confronts a disturbing question: can one achieve upward mobility without compromising their ethics? As Balram's story makes clear, the answer is a resounding no. His pursuit of wealth demands that he cut moral ties, forsake his family, and ultimately commit murder. His concluding insight—that wealth must be seized, not earned—epitomizes Adiga's damning view of a system in which prosperity is inseparable from exploitation.

Terry Eagleton's assertion that "capitalism erodes ethical considerations by subordinating all human interactions to market logic" (Eagleton 116) finds strong resonance in *The White Tiger*. In the novel, even personal and familial relationships are reduced to economic transactions. Balram's choice to kill Ashok stems not from hatred, but from cold economic calculation; eliminating Ashok becomes a strategic necessity, just as capitalism systematically depends on the marginalization of the working class.

### **Servitude vs. Individuality: Breaking Free from Generational Slavery**

One of the deep thematic examinations of *The White Tiger* is the tension between subjugation and individuality, specifically with regard to cross-generational oppression. Balram's journey from subservient servant to self-made businessman is more than a personal rebellion, a symbol of breaking free from a tradition of subjugation. His transformation is more than an economic move, it is an existential affirmation of self—a radical rebellion against a system that wants to turn people into mere tools for labour.

Adiga's description of bondage transcends economic subjugation to include a wider-scale psychological conditioning that makes rebellion unthinkable. The Halwai family, similar to many others in Laxmangarh, is caught in a pattern of life-long bondage, with hopes being smothered before even coming into being. Balram's father, too, for all his hopes for a better life, gives way

to a life of bondage, his agency diluted by systemic barriers making rebellion a futile exercise. This deeply ingrained fatalism insures a continuation of an ingrained hierarchy wherein bondage is not simply tolerated but accepted as a fixed fate. Balram's rebellion against this destiny is therefore a radical break from the submissive acceptance which has been characteristic of his legacy. His refusal is not so much a claim of ambition, however, as a violent relinquishing of the ideology which supports the apparatus of oppression. As journalist and critic Priyamvada Gopal comments, “Balram’s rebellion is not simply economic but epistemic—it represents a fundamental rupture in the way the subaltern perceives his own agency” (Gopal 133).

Nonetheless, Adiga does not represent this rebellion as an unalloyed victory. Balram's assertion of selfhood occurs at an unprecedented expense, which involves renouncing familial duty and moral obligation. His evolution into a businessman is no fulfilment of essential selfhood but an affirmation of self-interest that is identical with the callous individualism of the class he previously served. In abandoning slavery, Balram does not overcome oppression—he simply reproduces it differently.

In the end, *The White Tiger* is a deeply uncomfortable reflection on what it costs, within a world organized around systemic oppression, to be an individual. Balram's is a path not of freedom so much as of substitution—he does not upend the architecture of slavery so much as move outside it, leaving intact for others what he has escaped.

### **The City as a Symbol of Transformation**

Delhi, the populous city which is central to Balram Halwai’s development, is not only a geographic entity but also a transformative crucible—both a field of possibility and stage of moral decay. Aravind Adiga positions Delhi as a contradiction in terms, a city animated by the possibility of socio-economic mobility yet drowning in a decadent culture of corruption, insidious duplicitousness, and existential isolation. The city is prototypical of the neoliberal spirit, in which success is not grounded on meritocratic toil but on how much a person is able to negotiate an individual web of power, fraud, and amorality.



For Balram, Delhi is an escape from Laxmangarh's suffocating feudalism but of a sort which causes not self-realization but erosion of principles. Navigating his way about the urban labyrinth, he insidiously imbibes the city's ethos—a place where questions of morality are rendered secondary to the pragmatic imperatives of survival. Working for his first few days for Ashok as his chauffeur, Balram perceives Delhi as some universe of boundless possibility, some realm in which hard and fast class barriers are observable to be less strict than in the village. Yet this fantasy is systematically undermined by his observation of the ingrained mechanisms of exploitation on which the urban elite rely.

Critic Ulka Anjaria hypothesizes that *The White Tiger* offers an image of urban India as a dystopian counterpart to the pastoral idealism so commonly attributed to rural India and argues “the city, far from freeing its subjects, simply reorients the modalities of repression in insidious and psychologically internalized form” (Anjaria 94). Such an interpretation highlights the unprecedented extent to which Delhi functions not only as a physical and figurative imprisonment but also one wherein economic mobility requires some form of moral capitulation. Widespread corruption starting with the police to corporate leaders renders ethical integrity not so much of an obstacle but rather a liability.

Sudden contrast between village life and urban desire illuminates further the sufferings of India's marginalized for whom moving to the city is both hope and venture perilous and uncertain. Oppression is overt and rigidly enshrined in feudal strictures in Laxmangarh but in Delhi of a far more pernicious sort—one waged by stealth of mobility's illusion and finally by insistent demand for complicity in systemic exploitation. As critic Kanishka Chowdhury explains it, “the movement from rural to urban space in *The White Tiger* does not mark liberation but a movement from one kind of subjugation to another—one in which servitude is not imposed by overt coercion but by economic and psychic entrapment” (Chowdhury 71). Thus, just as Delhi is where Balram rises to prominence, so too is it where his moral ruin is born. His evolution from naive servant to hard-hearted businessman is forever tied to his experience of urban life and illustrates Adiga's broader criticism of Indian economic liberalisation as a Faustian pact—one by which economic success is achievable but only by losing one's moral compass.

## Power Dynamics: The Master-Servant Relationship

The intricate and ever-evolving master-servant relationship of *The White Tiger* is a keen commentary on how fragile power hierarchies are and how repressed volatility is foundational to regimes of oppression. At its core is the shifting relationship between Balram Halwai and his master, Ashok Sharma—a relationship initially framed as one of apparent loyalty but which transforms to become one of disillusionment, fury, and ultimately, betrayal. Balram, on his first few days of working, imbibes the ideology of servitude and views Ashok not just as an employer but a kind patriarch whose largesse is distinguished from traditional exploitative master stereotypes. Such perception is gradually destroyed when Balram slowly grows more conscious of inherent asymmetry of their relation. Rupture is not brought about by some single act of brutality but by gradual accumulation of consciousness of how servitude irrespective of whatever master's temperament is like dehumanizes in itself.

Priyamvada Gopal's observes, "The master-servant relationship in *The White Tiger* is not found in a context of mutual dependency, as is regularly possible to assert in classical feudal settings, but in an inevitably unstable setting in which servitude is preserved only by virtue of the servant's continued belief in his own powerlessness" (Gopal 138). Such an interpretation puts a particular emphasis on psychology of oppression, so that Balram's bowing to Ashok is not sustained by material coercion but by an internalized acceptance of submissiveness. But when Balram's experience of how mechanisms of power actually operate deepens further, his perception of Ashok also radically transforms. Not anymore viewing him to be some form of virtue incarnate, he begins to see the fundamental disposability of servitude embedded in an economic utilitarianism of human relations. Murder, not surprisingly, is not some act of sheer insurrection but is rather the consummation of a prolonged process of psychological emancipation—one in which Balram releases himself of ideological shackles of deference.

Kanishka Chowdhury insists that "Balram's betrayal of Ashok is less personal retribution than systemic determinacy—an act of agency in a world where agency is not granted but seized" (Chowdhury 79). Indeed, in representing for our eyes the master-servant relationship, Adiga's novel actually works to expose the vulnerability of hierarchy models, wherein repressed subjects,

once conscious of their own agency, possess the possibility of untying those very mechanisms hitherto constraining them.

### **The Narrative as a Subversion of Traditional Success Stories**

Adiga's *The White Tiger* is an inverse of the classical rags-to-riches narrative in contradiction to the rose-tinted triumphalist voice typically characterizing narratives of upward mobility. Unlike the ideal hero of classical success narratives, himself ascending by exertion of diligent toil and ethical perfection, Balram's is a career marked by amorality, exploitation, and cold-blooded murder. Not only does this reversal of fortune belie the classical fable of success but offers an incisive satire on today's popular capitalist mythos of neoliberalism.

The novel deliberately forswears economic mobility narratives' usual moralistic undertones and provides a hero in whom prosperity is grounded on violation not virtue. Balram, far from Dickens heroes of suffering overcome by strength and ethical clarity, learns early on that moral integrity is an obstacle to mobility not a facilitator and so quickly grasps that “the story of a poor man’s life is written on his body, in scars he has left on his own flesh” (Adiga 27) in a way which sums up this ethos and which exposes economic mobility within the status quo to require an absolute abnegation of ethical concerns.

Critic Meenakshi Mukherjee observes, “*The White Tiger* is a counter-narrative to the classical bildungsroman, wherein individual growth is not brought about through moral epiphany but by successive withdrawal from ethical constraints” (Mukherjee 212). As this interpretation indicates so strongly, it’s clear how far Adiga disrupts classical models of success, presenting in their stead a universe in which movement is impossible without complicity in structural violence.

Further, Balram’s character as an anti-hero and not a classical protagonist lies at the heart of the novel’s thematic construct. His ascendance is not ideal but representative of a world where morality is an obstacle to success itself. Terry Eagleton’s observation that “capitalism does not merely tolerate amorality—it actively incentivizes it” (Eagleton 123) has immediate relevance for *The White Tiger*, in which Balram’s survival and eventual success are predicated on his unencumbered willingness to cross ethical boundaries.

## Deconstructing the Indian Dream

The ideological construction of the “Indian Dream,” an epithet which echoes its American counterpart in inspiration of self-powered prosperity by diligence and industry, is amongst the most contested narratives of the socio-economic life of contemporary India. Whilst neoliberal economic reforms have fostered unprecedented possibilities for entrepreneurial enterprise and career mobility, Aravind Adiga’s *The White Tiger* systematically deconstructs this myth by unearthing embedded rank hierarchies which lock out genuine social mobility for subjects born into economic poverty. Along the trajectory of Balram Halwai’s life, the novel interrogates whether it is possible for an individual to realize success in a strongly stratified society through meritocratic principles or is necessarily locked to moral compromise, crime, and exploitation of systemic weak spots.

Adiga’s confessional epistolary form not only situates Balram as an untrustworthy but painfully frank eyewitness to India’s economic contradictions but also puts chief focus on the ethical challenges inherent to ascending the ladder of success. That the protagonist is ultimately converted from subordinated servant to putative entrepreneur challenges rags-to-riches tropes and forces the reader to consider by sheer begrudging discomfort the unpalatable fact of systemic corruption and ethical violation often qualifying for social ascendance. Critics such as Chowdhury assert that *The White Tiger* “reconfigures the neoliberal rags-to-riches tale into an uneasy examination of those structural mechanisms that sustain inequality, compelling in turn to ponder the unpalatable question of whether true self-made success is possible within an inevitably unfair framework” (Chowdhury 84). Thus far from sanctioning Balram’s entrepreneurial ascendance to greatness, the novel is itself a dystopian critique of a society commodifying success while also denying access to it to those on society’s margins.

## The Myth of Upward Mobility in a Highly Unequal Society

Centric to *The White Tiger* is a vituperative criticism of embedded economic and social norms disguising themselves as facilitators of mobility but actually fomenting generational immobility. The neoliberal consensus is that globalization and liberalization have eviscerated classical hierarchies and enabled individuals of Dalit origins to transcend their socio-economic constraints.

Nevertheless, Adiga's narrative of Balram's career systematically drills holes in this fantasy and reveals how mobility is not at all a factor of drive and hard work but is an outcome of collusion within the very mechanism perpetuating structural injustices. Balram's lived reality in Laxmangarh, India's prototype of the great underbelly of poverty found in rural India, is jarringly contrasted with the shining face of prosperity presented by Delhi's ascending economic elite. The contrast between these locations brings to fore the illusion of an egalitarian economic order and how the pathways of ascendance are neither equally based nor morally neutral. Critics such as Ulka Anjaria claim that "*The White Tiger* unearths the violent undercurrents of economic liberalization, exposing how the romanticized narrative of meritocratic success is, in fact, a carefully curated myth that obfuscates the perdurable power asymmetries of Indian society" (Anjaria 107).

The murder of Ashok, a literal and figurative act of distancing himself from his past, is not liberation but an acknowledgment of unmerciful realities of mobility to positions of power dictating how individuals rise to the top. Adiga therefore calls to question the possibility of such a "self-made man," implying in a world wherein power is maintained by a hardened elite, rising to positions of power is not a manifestation of individual brilliance but a manifestation of selective ethical compromise in a particular direction.

### **Self-Made or System-Made? A Question of Agency**

One of the most compelling questions raised in *The White Tiger* is whether Balram Halwai can truly be called a self-made man—or if his rise is just the outcome of a deeply flawed system that rewards transgression more than it does virtue. Aravind Adiga takes the familiar rags-to-riches story and turns it on its head, challenging the idea that hard work and perseverance alone can propel someone to success. Instead, the novel suggests that it's the very corruption and inequality built into the system that both enables and demands moral compromise from those trying to climb the ladder.

Balram certainly sees himself as exceptional. He refers to himself as a "white tiger," a rare and extraordinary creature who managed to break free from the cycle of poverty and servitude through sheer determination and cunning. But while he claims agency over his transformation, the novel

subtly exposes the scaffolding of institutional corruption and social violence that made his ascent possible. As scholars Megha Anwer and Aniket Jaaware argue, Balram's journey is less about individual brilliance and more about his ability to navigate—and exploit—the rot at the heart of the system: “Balram's transformation is less a testament to individual ingenuity than a calculated negotiation with the perversions of a system that offers no ethical avenues for mobility” (Anwer and Jaaware 191).

This tension—between personal agency and systemic determinism—becomes even more pronounced once Balram becomes an entrepreneur in Bangalore. His success there is built on the same unethical tactics that once oppressed him: bribery, manipulation, and exploitation. Rather than escaping the system, he replicates its logic. He may be in a new role, but the rules of the game haven't changed. This raises a crucial paradox: can anyone truly be free in a society where power and opportunity are so unevenly distributed? Balram claims liberation, but his autonomy is deeply entangled with the very forces he believes he's escaped.

In this way, the novel resists any easy celebration of success. It challenges readers to think beyond conventional success stories and to question what kind of sacrifices—ethical, emotional, human—are required to “make it” in a world rigged in favour of the few.

## Conclusion

In the end, *The White Tiger* operates as both a dark fable and a scathing critique of India's entrenched class divisions. It forces us to confront the contradictions within the country's aspirational narrative. Balram's rise—from an obedient servant to a wealthy business owner—isn't framed as either heroic or villainous. Instead, it serves as a troubling reflection on what it means to escape poverty in a society where justice is scarce and the rules are made by those in power.

As critic Ulka Anjaria notes, Adiga embraces the in-between spaces of morality. Balram isn't simply a product of corruption—he is its beneficiary and its mirror. His journey compels readers to ask a difficult question: in a world so deeply fractured, is genuine reform even possible? Or is survival—and success—only attainable by bending the very rules that keep others trapped?

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## Beyond Stereotypes: A Linguistic–Stylistic Study of Indian Womanhood in Anita Nair’s Fiction

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### Abstract

This paper investigates how Anita Nair’s fiction redefines Indian womanhood through language. Using a linguistic–stylistic framework that integrates Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), Appraisal Theory, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), and discourse–pragmatic tools, the study offers a close reading of *Ladies Coupé* (2001), *Mistress* (2005), *Lessons in Forgetting* (2010), and *Eating Wasps* (2018). Across these novels, Nair’s narratorial strategies—shifts in focalization, transitivity patterns, multilingual resources, and intertextual revoicing of myth—construct subjectivities that resist stereotypical scripts of docility, sacrifice, and silence. Findings indicate consistent foregrounding of women’s material and mental processes; systematic deployment of positive self-appraisal; pragmatics of resistance through refusal, counter-questions, and irony; and recuperation of culturally resonant metaphors to reframe gendered norms. The paper contributes a linguistically grounded account of feminist narration in contemporary Indian English writing.

**Keywords:** Anita Nair; Indian womanhood; Systemic Functional Linguistics; Appraisal; Critical Discourse Analysis; stylistics; feminist narratology; discourse and gender; multilingualism.

### 1. Introduction

Stereotypical representations of Indian women often align with scripts of docility, sacrifice, and silence (Mohanty, 2003). Anita Nair’s oeuvre challenges these, offering protagonists who negotiate desire, labour, kinship, and public life with agency. While previous literary criticism has explored Nair’s feminist themes (Spivak, 1988; Butler, 1990), fewer studies show *how* linguistic



choices realise these themes at the level of lexicogrammar, discourse structure, and narrative voice. This paper addresses that gap by providing a linguistic analysis of selected novels to demonstrate how womanhood is reimaged through language.

Research questions: (1) How do transitivity patterns distribute agency among women and men (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004)? (2) How does evaluative language (Martin & White, 2005) construct selfhood and resistance? (3) What discourse–pragmatic strategies negotiate power in dialogue (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Tannen, 1990)? (4) How do intertextuality and metaphor recast cultural frames of gender (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980)? We argue that Nair’s writing systematically repositions women as knowers, doers, and evaluators within social worlds aligned against them.

## 2. Literature Review

Feminist narratology (Lanser, 1992; Warhol, 1989) highlights how voice, focalization, and narrative authority intersect with gender. Indian English women’s writing has shifted from archetypes to plural, intersectional identities (Cameron, 1992; Bucholtz & Hall, 2005). Nair’s *Ladies Coupé* has been read as a polyphonic testimony (Menon, 2005), while *Mistress* is praised for its Kathakali framework (Rajesh, 2011). *Lessons in Forgetting* and *Eating Wasps* extend concerns to trauma and shame (Sarkar, 2020). Prior readings thematise emancipation but lack linguistic detail.

In linguistics, CDA interrogates how texts reproduce or challenge power (Fairclough, 1995; Wodak, 2001). Appraisal Theory models stance (Martin & White, 2005). Pragmatics clarifies refusals, irony, and politeness (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969). Conceptual Metaphor Theory reveals cultural frames (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). This paper integrates these frameworks to foreground Nair’s feminist stylistics.

## 3. Theoretical Framework

The present study draws upon a multidisciplinary linguistic framework to examine Anita Nair’s redefinition of Indian womanhood. Systemic Functional Linguistics (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004) is employed to analyse transitivity, modality, and agency, revealing how women characters

negotiate power, subjectivity, and social roles through grammatical choices. Appraisal Theory (Martin & White, 2005) further enriches this analysis by uncovering evaluative stances, emotional expressions, and dialogic positioning that foreground female resistance and solidarity. Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1995; van Dijk, 1997) situates these linguistic patterns within larger socio-political contexts, exposing the ideological struggles and interdiscursive negotiations between patriarchy, tradition, and modernity. Pragmatics, informed by Speech Act Theory (Austin, 1962) and Politeness Theory (Brown & Levinson, 1987), sheds light on conversational strategies—such as irony, directives, or face-saving devices—through which women assert or resist authority. Finally, Metaphor and Intertextuality (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Kristeva, 1986) reveal how Nair revoices cultural myths, metaphors of journey and rebirth, and intertextual references to reconstruct womanhood beyond stereotypes. Collectively, this integrated framework enables a nuanced linguistic and cultural interpretation of Nair's feminist poetics.

**3.1 Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL):** Systemic Functional Linguistics, as developed by Halliday and Matthiessen (2004), provides a comprehensive framework for analysing how language creates meaning in social contexts. It focuses on the functional organisation of grammar through the ideational, interpersonal, and textual metafunctions. Within this study, transitivity, modality, and agency are central. Transitivity analysis helps uncover how experiences and actions are distributed among characters, showing whether women are depicted as active agents or passive recipients. Modality highlights obligation, probability, and inclination, reflecting the power dynamics shaping women's voices. Agency, encoded in grammatical structures, reveals ideological stances, especially in how women reclaim subjectivity. Thus, SFL allows us to see how linguistic structures embody gendered worldviews and empower Nair's redefinition of womanhood.

**3.2 Appraisal Theory:** Appraisal Theory, proposed by Martin and White (2005), extends SFL into the domain of evaluation, focusing on how language expresses attitude, negotiates stances, and builds solidarity. Its three subsystems—attitude, engagement, and graduation—are highly relevant in analysing Anita Nair's novels. Attitude explores affect (emotion), judgement (ethics), and appreciation (aesthetics), enabling us to see how women's experiences are evaluated. Engagement examines how voices interact dialogically, whether through expansion or contraction

of perspectives. Graduation reveals the intensity or scaling of evaluation, showing how emotions and ideologies are intensified or downplayed. Through this lens, Nair's characters articulate resistance, irony, and solidarity, redefining female subjectivities. Appraisal theory thus highlights the nuanced ways in which women's identities are negotiated, challenged, and affirmed within the discourse of Indian womanhood.

**3.3 Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA):** Critical Discourse Analysis, as theorised by Fairclough (1995) and van Dijk (1997), examines the interplay between language, power, and ideology. CDA views discourse as both shaped by and shaping social structures, exposing how dominant ideologies are reproduced or resisted in texts. For analysing Nair's works, CDA is useful in exploring how patriarchal ideologies are embedded in everyday speech and cultural narratives. It emphasises interdiscursivity—the blending of discourses such as tradition, modernity, and feminism—through which Nair redefines womanhood. CDA also uncovers the ways women resist hegemonic norms by constructing counter-discourses. By examining linguistic choices within broader socio-political contexts, CDA reveals how Anita Nair not only critiques gender inequalities but also constructs transformative spaces for female agency and empowerment.

**3.4 Pragmatics:** Pragmatics, drawing on Austin's (1962) Speech Act Theory and Brown and Levinson's (1987) Politeness Theory, examines language use in interactional contexts. Speech acts such as directives, commissives, and expressives in Nair's works highlight how women assert, resist, or negotiate power. For instance, imperatives often mark resistance against patriarchal commands, while commissives reflect women's determination to change their lives. Politeness strategies show how characters manage face needs in unequal relationships, with irony often functioning as a subversive tool. Pragmatic analysis reveals how Nair's characters challenge societal hierarchies not just through what they say but how they say it. Thus, pragmatics highlights the subtle, performative dimensions of resistance and identity formation, illuminating the conversational strategies women employ in asserting agency within patriarchal structures.

**3.5 Metaphor & Intertextuality:** Metaphor and intertextuality provide powerful tools for uncovering the symbolic and cultural dimensions of Anita Nair's discourse. Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) Conceptual Metaphor Theory demonstrates how metaphors shape thought and social

perception. Nair frequently employs metaphors of confinement, journey, and rebirth to articulate the struggles and resilience of women. Intertextuality, as theorised by Kristeva (1986), highlights how texts echo and revoice cultural narratives. By reworking mythological, literary, and folk references, Nair repositions Indian womanhood within feminist frameworks, offering new interpretations of cultural traditions. These revoicing challenges patriarchal appropriations of cultural heritage and empowers alternative readings. Together, metaphor and intertextuality reveal how Nair's novels transcend mere narrative to engage with broader cultural discourses, reshaping the collective imagination of Indian womanhood.

#### 4. Corpus and Methodology

Primary texts: *Ladies Coupé* (2001), *Mistress* (2005), *Lessons in Forgetting* (2010), *Eating Wasps* (2018). Close reading with coding for transitivity, appraisal, pragmatics, and metaphor. Extracts are paraphrased. Analysis steps: identify scenes; code processes; annotate evaluation; map speech acts; trace intertext and metaphor. The corpus for this study comprises four major novels by Anita Nair—*Ladies Coupé* (2001), *Mistress* (2005), *Lessons in Forgetting* (2010), and *Eating Wasps* (2018)—as these texts most explicitly engage with questions of womanhood, identity, and resistance. These works were selected for their thematic continuity and their representation of different stages of Nair's literary career, offering a comprehensive view of how her feminist poetics evolves across time and context. The study adopts a qualitative, interpretive methodology grounded in linguistics and feminist literary criticism. Specifically, it employs Systemic Functional Linguistics (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004) to examine transitivity, modality, and agency in character discourse; Appraisal Theory (Martin & White, 2005) to explore evaluative strategies; and Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1995; van Dijk, 1997) to interrogate ideological underpinnings. Pragmatic analysis (Austin, 1962; Brown & Levinson, 1987) is used to unpack speech acts, irony, and politeness strategies, while metaphor and intertextuality frameworks (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Kristeva, 1986) illuminate cultural revoicing and symbolic resistance. The methodology combines close textual analysis of selected excerpts with secondary scholarship on feminist discourse in Indian English literature. By integrating these frameworks, the study foregrounds the interplay between language, narrative form, and feminist ideology, providing a multi-layered understanding of how Nair redefines Indian womanhood through linguistic choices.

## 5. Analysis and Discussion

Anita Nair's novels collectively demonstrate how language reshapes Indian womanhood by dismantling stereotypes and foregrounding female agency. In *Ladies Coupé*, women's narratives highlight material and mental processes that emphasize decision-making and self-assertion, while modality and pragmatic strategies of irony and refusal resist patriarchal coercion (Menon, 2005). *Mistress*, through the intertextual lens of Kathakali moods, articulates female desire using active processes and evaluative discourse, repositioning intimacy as a site of empowerment (Rajesh, 2011). In *Lessons in Forgetting*, institutional erasure of agency is countered by reinstating survivors' voices and shifting appraisal from victims to systemic negligence (Chaudhuri, 2014). Finally, *Eating Wasps* reframes shame in digital publics by using semantic inversion, irony, and metaphors of fire and stings to reclaim resilience (Sarkar, 2020). Across these works, Nair's linguistic strategies—ranging from transitivity choices and appraisal to pragmatics and metaphor—construct a discourse that redefines Indian womanhood beyond stereotypes.

**5.1 *Ladies Coupé*:** In *Ladies Coupé*, Nair's narrative foregrounds women's voices through material and mental processes such as doing, deciding, and remembering, which highlight autonomy rather than passive endurance. This linguistic strategy challenges the stereotype of women as confined to relational roles like being "good wives" or dutiful daughters. Passive forms are often used to expose coercion, such as when women recount how decisions were imposed upon them, thereby unveiling structures of patriarchal domination. Yet, modality shifts the power dynamic: self-authored declarations such as "I must for myself" subvert the imposed obligations of familial duty. Pragmatically, women employ refusal, irony, and counter-questions, destabilising patriarchal scripts and reframing personal narratives. Such discursive practices illustrate how language becomes a medium of resistance and redefinition (Menon, 2005).

**5.2 *Mistress*:** *Mistress* is structured around the aesthetic and emotional palette of Kathakali moods, an intertextual device that frames the exploration of passion, betrayal, and artistic expression (Rajesh, 2011). Within this framework, female desire is articulated through active processes that foreground agency and initiative, contrasting traditional portrayals of passive femininity. The language of appreciation and judgement is used to reframe both intimacy and art, challenging

conventional morality. Pragmatically, dialogues are charged with bold assertions, rhetorical questions, and playful mitigation, which together construct a negotiation of erotic ethics. Through this dialogic interplay, women's voices emerge as authoritative and self-validating, repositioning female sexuality not as transgression but as a legitimate mode of self-expression within India's cultural poetics.

**5.3 *Lessons in Forgetting*:** In *Lessons in Forgetting*, Nair confronts institutional discourses that often erase women's agency by using nominalisation, reducing acts of violence to abstract "incidents." Against this linguistic erasure, Nair reinstates survivors' epistemic authority by foregrounding actors, voices, and their narratives of resistance (Chaudhuri, 2014). The appraisal framework is evident in how systemic negligence, rather than victims, is evaluated critically, thereby shifting the blame from individuals to institutions. Pragmatic strategies such as pointed questioning and dialogic challenges restore accountability to social and legal frameworks that otherwise silence women. Through this narrative, Nair not only critiques systemic failures but also reconstructs solidarity among women, reinforcing resilience and collective responsibility through the linguistic re-authoring of their experiences.

**5.4 *Eating Wasps*:** *Eating Wasps* examines the stigma of shame in contemporary media and digital publics, portraying how women are judged and vilified in hyper-visible spaces (Sarkar, 2020). Nair reframes these discourses by shifting evaluative judgement from women to the society that polices them. Linguistically, semantic inversion is used to reclaim derogatory labels, transforming insults into emblems of empowerment. Pragmatically, irony and subversive speech acts destabilise the authority of public shame narratives. Metaphors of fire and stings, recurring throughout the text, function as symbolic vehicles for resilience, embodying both the pain of social scrutiny and the power of survival. By linguistically reclaiming spaces of humiliation, Nair highlights women's capacity to resist cultural silencing and reconstruct dignity on their own terms.

## 6. Cross-Textual Synthesis

Reading Anita Nair's *Ladies Coupé* (2001), *Mistress* (2005), *Lessons in Forgetting* (2010), and *Eating Wasps* (2018) together reveals a coherent yet evolving linguistic and thematic project that challenges entrenched stereotypes of Indian womanhood. Across these novels, Nair consistently

foregrounds women's agency by reworking transitivity structures and modality to shift women from passive recipients of patriarchal authority to active agents of choice, memory, and desire. In *Ladies Coupé*, self-authored obligations such as "I must for myself" contest the imposed duties of wifehood and motherhood, while in *Mistress*, female desire is openly articulated through bold assertions that refuse cultural silencing. *Lessons in Forgetting* extends this trajectory by problematizing institutional discourses that obscure agency through nominalisation, while Nair reinstates actors and survivors as epistemic authorities, demonstrating a critical discourse intervention. Similarly, *Eating Wasps* takes this resistance into the realm of media and digital publics, where shame and judgement are reconfigured through semantic inversion and metaphorical reclamation, thereby underscoring resilience in the face of contemporary scrutiny.

Appraisal theory deepens this synthesis by showing how Nair crafts affect, judgement, and appreciation across her texts. The women of *Ladies Coupé* express solidarity through shared emotional evaluations, while in *Mistress*, desire and art are reframed through aesthetic appreciation that validates women's subjectivity. In *Lessons in Forgetting*, solidarity emerges in the condemnation of systemic negligence rather than individual blame, marking a shift from private struggle to collective critique. Finally, *Eating Wasps* expands the evaluative spectrum into the digital sphere, where irony and revoicing challenge the circulation of stigma. Pragmatically, her characters employ refusal, irony, questioning, and mitigation as strategies that destabilize hegemonic scripts, ranging from familial authority to societal morality.

Metaphor and intertextuality further bind the novels together. Whether through the motif of journeys in *Ladies Coupé*, the Kathakali moods in *Mistress*, the narrative of forgetting in *Lessons in Forgetting*, or the fiery metaphors of *Eating Wasps*, Nair continually revoices cultural symbols to recast womanhood as plural, self-determining, and dialogic. The cross-textual synthesis thus reveals a feminist poetics rooted in linguistic agency, evaluative solidarity, and intertextual creativity, positioning Nair not merely as a storyteller but as a cultural critic who redefines the discursive space of Indian womanhood.

## 7. Implications

The linguistic and literary analysis of Anita Nair's novels carries wide-ranging implications for



feminist literary criticism, discourse studies, and cultural rethinking of Indian womanhood. First, by applying Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), the study demonstrates how women's agency can be traced and redefined through grammar itself—transitivity, modality, and agency become tools of resistance against narratives that historically silenced women. This implies that literature is not only an artistic space but also a linguistic battlefield where structures of oppression and liberation are encoded and challenged.

Second, the integration of Appraisal Theory highlights the ways in which affect, judgement, and appreciation articulate solidarity among women, enabling a reconfiguration of collective identity. This suggests that evaluative language can create alternative communities of meaning where women are validated not for conformity but for self-determined choices.

Third, through Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), the findings show how Nair destabilizes institutional discourses—marriage, art, media, and law—that perpetuate gender hierarchies. This implies a critical intervention in how cultural ideologies are both circulated and resisted in narrative form. Pragmatically, the novels demonstrate that speech acts such as refusal, irony, and questioning are not mere stylistic choices but pragmatic acts of resistance, modeling how women may reframe interactional dynamics in real life.

Finally, the use of metaphor and intertextuality implies that feminist narratives can revoice and transform cultural traditions without rejecting them entirely. By reworking Kathakali aesthetics, metaphors of journeys, or symbols of fire, Nair exemplifies how tradition can be dialogically appropriated to generate new meanings of womanhood. These findings carry broader implications for South Asian gender studies, suggesting that linguistic and cultural analyses can reveal how literature operates as a site for reclaiming identity, fostering resilience, and challenging stereotypes in a rapidly globalizing yet patriarchal world.

## **8. Limitations and Future Research**

Corpus limited to four novels. Future research: corpus-based quantification, comparison with contemporaries (Roy, Desai, Kandasamy), inclusion of paratexts. While this study offers valuable insights into Anita Nair's redefinition of Indian womanhood through a linguistic lens, certain



limitations must be acknowledged. The analysis, though grounded in Systemic Functional Linguistics, Appraisal Theory, and Critical Discourse Analysis, remains selective, focusing on specific texts and representative excerpts rather than exhaustive coverage of her complete oeuvre. Moreover, the scope of pragmatics and metaphorical analysis is constrained by cultural and contextual interpretations that may vary across readers and regions. Another limitation lies in the reliance on secondary criticism, which, though rich, may not capture the full range of reader responses or lived experiences of women engaging with Nair's works. Future research could adopt comparative frameworks, situating Nair alongside other Indian or global women writers to trace transnational patterns of linguistic resistance. Additionally, corpus-based methods or digital humanities approaches could provide quantitative support to qualitative findings, while ethnographic or reception studies might illuminate how diverse audiences interpret and internalize these narratives. Such extensions would enrich our understanding of the interplay between language, literature, and gender in shaping contemporary feminist discourses.

## 9. Conclusion

Anita Nair's fiction redefines Indian womanhood through linguistic mechanisms of agency, stance, and resistance. Her narratives not only depict but *perform* emancipation, expanding the poetics of Indian womanhood beyond stereotypes. This study has examined how Anita Nair, through her novels, redefines Indian womanhood by challenging stereotypes and offering nuanced linguistic articulations of agency, desire, and resistance. Using Systemic Functional Linguistics, Appraisal Theory, Critical Discourse Analysis, Pragmatics, and Metaphor Theory, the analysis revealed how her female characters disrupt patriarchal discourses through active processes, self-authored modality, evaluative solidarity, and pragmatic resistance. Nair's narratives reposition women not as passive bearers of tradition but as dynamic subjects who negotiate identity within familial, cultural, and institutional frameworks. By reframing shame, reclaiming labels, and interweaving tradition with feminist voices, her works foreground literature as a powerful site for reimagining gender relations. Ultimately, the study demonstrates that language is central to feminist transformation, and Nair's writing exemplifies how narrative and discourse can empower women to move beyond stereotypes into self-determined subjectivities.

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## Nazrul's *The Rebel* versus Shelley's *Ode to the West Wind*: Revolution and Freedom

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### Abstract

In the course of the study, this paper tries to make a justification of the revolutionary zeal which is prevalent throughout two legendary lyrics “Ode to the West Wind” and “The Rebel (Bidrohi)”. Percy Bysshe Shelley’s “Ode to the West Wind” and Kazi Nazrul Islam’s “The Rebel (Bidrohi)” demonstrate the role of the poet as the voice of change and revolution. The two poems are superbly fabricated on their creators’ credo “destruction” and “creation” revolting against old customs, society and authority, and vice versa ushering in the new establishments. Both poets rebelled against British rule. One did this against his own nation and another was against colonials. They are rebels and visionaries of change through the spirit of revolution, though it is not expressed in same ways. The rebel in “The Rebel (Bidrohi)”, is a powerful young man and the reformer, in “Ode to the West Wind”, the focus is an old man who is seeking help. Both use much imagery and metaphors from nature, religious books, myths and history to visualize the spirit of revolution which is the weapon of freedom against individual, political, economic and religious slavery. They were actually harbingers of Renaissance humanism. Hence, their voice of revolution and change have been universalized for all people of all ages who are deprived of their rights.

**Key words:** Creation, Destruction, Freedom of the People, Spirit of revolution

### Introduction

Both Kazi Nazrul Islam and Percy Bysshe Shelley have been recognized as poets of revolution and change for their poems, predominantly, “The Rebel (Bidrohi)”, and “Ode to the West Wind” and are sometimes compared to one another in literary discussions regarding revolutionary spirit and rebel poets. Percy Bysshe Shelley was a Renaissance man of 19<sup>th</sup> century England. Like other Romantic poets of the age, he was also influenced by the humanistic doctrine of Italian renaissance and by the ideals (e.g. liberty, equality, and fraternity) of French revolution. Shelley’s “Ode to West Wind” is the great work of English literature. In this poem, Shelley has invoked the west wind to come to help him in his reformatory activities against all kinds of oppressions, inequalities, bondages, ignorance, and the hypocrisy of the higher class against subaltern. For his writing of political pamphlets to support the rights of common people, he had to stay in exile in Italy until his death to avoid government persecution and the poem “Ode to the West wind” was created at that time from a bleeding heart addressing the west wind to spread the bloody message of reformation all over the world as the poet himself was unable.

On the other hand, the rebel poet Kazi Nazrul Islam emerged as the eminent renaissance poet of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Bengali Renaissance. At that time, Bengal was under British rule. The British ruled the Indian subcontinent along with many other parts of the world (e.g. Canada, United States of America, and Africa). In India, Nazrul was the first poet to protest against British authority and be sent to prison. Nazrul not only struggled against external colonialism and poverty but also revolted against internal bondages, e.g. the misunderstanding of orthodox Muslims, the tyranny of Maulavi, and the prevailing communalism between Hindus and Muslims in India. In his writings, he has advocated for humanism. He was very imaginative like Shelley, and a worshipper of beauty. The world has watched the rising of an evil planet around the dazzling sun of British rule in the publication of Nazrul’s authoritative poem ‘The Rebel’. For this poem, Nazrul is called “Bidrohi Poet”. Anyone who reads this poem feels the flow of spirit of revolution in his vein. Both Shelley and Nazrul provided similar revolutionary messages in their poems, though they were from different political and social settings. Both were visionary of revolution. They believed in the same Renaissance humanism.

There are also some dissimilarities, e.g., a subtle distinction in their use of ‘thou’, and ‘I’. Nazrul’s “I” has multitude features. The poet here worships the “self” using pronoun “I” which integrates both destructive and creative forces of the universe. Nazrul has used such contrastive

binary images and symbols to describe “I” which is full of mystic power of Indian mythology. “I” will not bow to anyone. Thus, “I” acts as the stimulator to build a rebellion by shaking the feelings of the reader. However, both creations have provided the same message for freedom of individuals against tyranny, inequality, superstition, corruption, racism and exploitation. In spite of having some dissimilarities, “Nazrul is called the Shelley of the East (Ahmed, 1959)”. There are some reasons for such comparison.

### **Renaissance and Revolutionary Zeal for Freedom in Nazrul**

The Bengal Renaissance was a social reform movement that emerged in Bengal, a region of undivided India, during the 19th and early 20th centuries under British rule. The Bengal Renaissance is generally regarded as having its origins with Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1775–1833) and reaching its culmination with Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941). There have been numerous individuals who carried specific elements of unique intellectual and creative contributions. Nineteenth-century Bengal was a remarkable fusion of religious and social reformers, scholars, literary luminaries, journalists, patriotic speakers, and scientists, collectively shaping the essence of a renaissance and symbolizing the shift from the 'medieval' to the 'modern' era. It was also different from the European Renaissance, since the Europeans did not face a challenge of subjugation by foreign rulers. The British subjected the Indian subcontinent to exploitation for two centuries. They weakened the entire system and destroyed the peoples’ social, economic, political and cultural life. British rule in India altered the course of the country's history. The British arrived in India at the beginning of the seventeenth century. This was the period when the British East India Company was founded in India to disassemble the Dutch monopoly on the spice trade.

Over time, the East India Company expanded its influence and began governing the country. However, its policies were not accepted by the Indians, who united to revolt against the company. This resulted in the downfall of the company, and the administration of India was taken over directly by the Queen. Then, the British took control of several important states and established their own laws and policies. Gradually, yet swiftly, the entire Indian subcontinent fell under British control. By the mid-nineteenth century, the British had introduced railways, the telegraph, and postal services in India. This was an effort to establish their rule in India for the long term. The British inaugurated the first railway line from Howrah in Calcutta to Raniganj in Bihar. The introduction of the telegraph and postal services made communication across the

country more efficient.

Through a series of ruthless wars between 1757 and 1857, Britain managed to assert its dominance over the Indian subcontinent. The British East India Company had a large export business that served as its source of profit, and to sustain the export of valuable materials from India to England, they sought to secure permanent dominance in India. During Sepoy Rebellion (1857), the remaining independent Indian states had been captured by the British. As a result, the Company exported vast amounts of gold, jewels, silver, silk, cotton, and numerous other valuable goods to England each year. In exchange, they brought inexpensive cotton fabrics and industrial goods from England to India. The company's profits were used to improve public and private infrastructure in Britain and to expand British colonialism in Asia and Africa

To increase and control British territories, the East India Company kept a strong army of 257,000 Sepoys (native Indian soldiers, known as Sowars in cavalry units), which were led by 40,000 British officers trained at the East India Company College in Addiscombe, the company's military school in England. The economic consequences of British rule were devastating for Indian social life. The Industrial Revolution led to the destruction of local and traditional products. Consequently, many independent local producers lost their livelihoods and fell into poverty, unable to compete with the inexpensive goods from Manchester

Ruhul Alam Siddique said (2011, March 6), "Nazrul Islam was Bangladesh's national poet and a great source of inspiration for the people of his country. He was a multifaceted creative individual who rebelled against injustice and a mass-oriented person who inspired workers to fight against oppressive forces. His fiery writings roused anger against the British, as a result of which he was put into jail. He was a secular man, a passionate advocate for religious harmony, and kept promoting inter-faith harmony, particularly between Hindus and Muslims". It is again stated, "His revolt, it is important to remember, was aimed not only against the foreign rulers, but against oppression of all kinds - social, economic and political. Nazrul Islam was not a nationalist, although he knew that national liberation was the first step towards the liberation of the masses from social and economic oppression" (Chowdhury, 2006). His works, often of a universal nature, were embraced by all. Indians used Nazrul's works in their resistance against British rule, while after independence, Pakistanis utilized his works to support Pakistan against India. Later, during

the Liberation War of 1971, Bengali-speaking East Pakistanis used his works to support their cause and oppose Pakistan.

There were also internal handicaps in India e.g. communal clash, caste system, dowry system, and the domination of orthodox mullahs. Therefore, intellectual enlightenment was not sufficient, there were also necessities for social and political enlightenments. To stabilize their (British) control over India, the British applied their formula “Divide and Rule”. Thus, they created division between Hindu and Muslim; higher class and lower class; and Bengali and Non-Bengali, etc. to continue exploitation in India. Kazi Nazrul Islam has risen like a comet in the cloud-cast sky of undivided Bengal to speak for all. He has spoken for both Hindus and Muslims and written for the shelter of homeless people; for the rice of starving people; and against the hypocrisy of mullahs. Nazrul did not have any political vision. He wanted to drive away the foreign rulers from his country. Among all those humiliations, and suppressions of humanity, the advent of Nazrul was like the rescuer of man as an angel. He taught them to claim for equal rights and tried to establish the dignity of man. In fact, Nazrul wanted to unite all humanity irrespective of their creed, caste, gender and race.

### **French Revolution and Spirit of Freedom in Shelley**

The politician, philosopher, social reformer, and poet, Percy Bysshe Shelley was born in the middle of England’s socio-political turmoil. The British Empire lost its American colonies in 1776. The American Revolution caused lasting influence on the minds of liberal people. Following the path of American Revolution, the common people of France revolted against monarchy and overthrew the King Louis XVI. That created great horror all over Europe. The government of Great Britain was also scared of a mass revolution within the country. There was a reaction among common people in support of French Revolution. They also felt for freedom of mind and individual existence. Their struggle was not against foreign rule but it was against internal slavery, lack of safety and the rights of common people. Older Romantics poets like Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey welcomed the radical ideologies of French Revolution. Shelley’s England was wounded by the despotism of its evil progenies. Upper class people had seized the whole power and property of the country while a vast crowd was leading a degrading life. The Church was one of the governing classes of suppressor. There were discriminations in the distribution of wealth. For this reason, Shelley has to go against his own people who belonged to upper classes.



Shelley was himself a member of an aristocratic family. But he did not enjoy the privileges of his class. Rather he talked for common people, and for humanism. His mind was bled by watching the dehumanization of Irish people. He was enthusiast for Catholic emancipation in Ireland. Shelley published pamphlets, and arranged meeting in support of Irish causes. He tried to wake up people for a revolution. There was government indictment against the publication of any democratic propaganda. In order to avoid persecution, Shelley had passed a long period of his life in exile in Italy until his death by drowning in 1829.

Shelley's heart was wounded by the Peterloo Massacre on 16 August 1819. He wrote a political poem "The Mask of Anarchy" in 1819 on Peterloo Massacre (which is regarded as the first modern statement of the principle of nonviolent resistance), asking for freedom. But "The Mask of Anarchy" was not published during his lifetime. It has been stated that the failure of the publication of "The Mask of Anarchy" has caused Shelley to write "Ode to the West Wind". This poem is also a lamentation of Shelley's failure to help the injured people of Peterloo Massacre as he was in Italy at that time. Shelley's life was spent pursuing a vision of freedom; a longing for a new society free of all sorts of prejudices and conventions. He wanted to rectify the society, and to remove the class distinction. Shelley's philosophy was not totally fruitless. His philosophy of destruction and creation later influenced many reform activities, and contributed to the construction of modern progressive England.

"Ode to the West Wind" includes Shelley's consciousness of the revolution for change and again his feelings of impotence and inability as he was in exile in Italy from England. But this lyric also highlights his historical insight, his foresight of coming reform as well as hope for freedom. So, he has employed the binary image of natural cycle side by side, i.e. birth-death; destruction-creation; old-new; winter-spring, etc., because destruction and decay during winter are essential to clean up the earth and free the space for new beauty. Though Shelley was depressed by his helplessness against corruption and the suppression of Irish people and massacre of Peterloo, he was a positivist, foreseeing the corruption and massacre as a necessary part of reform and peace. Shelley is not fatalist as Keats is in 'To Autumn'. Shelley's "West Wind" pictures natural change to sketch social reform metaphorically. In this way, Shelley hails himself as a messenger of inspiration through words like the west wind's breath which has both destructive and creative spirit and as a poet of new vision who challenges old.



## **Influence of Marxism in Nazrul and Shelley' Poetry**

Karl Marx was a 19<sup>th</sup> century German thinker, economist, and sociologist whose works laid the foundation for modern communism. He (Marx) talked for the working class and for humanism. He opposed oppression and capitalist nations with his sharp and impactful writings.

Kazi Nazrul Islam was the first Bengali poet who have come from the proletariat and raised his voice for the independence of colonial India in 1922 (Azfar, 2020). Nazrul Islam was influenced by his friend, comrade Muzzaffar Ahmed. Nazrul Islam's poem "the Rebel (Bidrohi)", published in 1921, has been characterized as anticolonial poem because of its tone, and for its thematic and structural novelties. Nazrul said,

Proclaim Hero

Proclaim: I raise my head high!

Before me bows down the Himalayan peaks!

Proclaim, Hero,

Proclaim: rending through the sky,

Surpassing the moon, the sun, the planets, the stars

Piercing through the earth, the heavens, the cosmos,

Ripping apart the Almighty's throne

Have I risen, the eternal wonder of the creators of the Universe (lines 1-9)

Here, Nazrul identified the people of colonial India with "I" (Hoque and AlQahtani, 2024). These people were subjugated by the British. They lost their identity and developed a sense of alienation (Fanon, 2004). Here, Nazrul described those alienated people as hero and inspired them to hold their head high. Nazrul's "I" represents the colonial oppressed people who were inspired to oppose the subjugation of the colonized and seek the path for freedom.

In his seminar paper for the inaugural Annual Kazi Nazrul Islam Lecture, Langley (2007) highlighted the aims of Nazrul's poetry as "the empowerment of individuals and groups; the actual promotion of diversity itself; and the affirmation of the moral in human life and societies." Tanzin Sultana (2020, 69) analyzed Nazrul's poetry as anticolonial and divided Nazrul's works into five categories of resistance: "the Asserting Resistance in Nazrul's ... struggle against the British Empire, the struggle against exploiters, the struggle against class distinction, the struggle against social inequality, and the struggle against communal riot". Marxism is visible in Nazrul's works,

since he wrote for the working class and protested against the ruling class. Nazrul said in “the Rebel”

Weary of struggles, I, the great rebel,  
Shall rest in quiet only when I find  
The sky and the air free of the piteous groans of the oppressed  
Only when the battle fields are cleared of jingling  
Bloody sabres  
Shall I, weary of struggles, rest in quiet, (lines 142-146)

Conversely, Percy Bysshe Shelley was also influenced by the ideologies of Karl Marx (1818-1883). Shelley spoke out against the bourgeois. He wrote for the working class of England who were ill-clothed, ill-fed and ill-educated. Overall, Shelley wanted to free the working class from the tyranny of the corrupt governments, and the priests. Shelley advocated for equality and equal freedom for all in the society. His positive ideology is expressed in the poem “Ode to the West Wind”

The trumpet of prophecy! O Wind  
If winter comes, can Spring be far behind? (lines 69-70)

Like Nazrul, Shelley also called the working class to wake up and rebel against the oppression to build up a new society where equity, truth, love and justice will govern the world.

### **Discussion of the Poems “Ode to the West Wind” and “The Rebel (Bidrohi)”**

“The Rebel” and “Ode to the West Wind” are in the genre of lyric. They may be termed as songs, too. Nazrul’s “The Rebel”, is a self-glorification, when the rebel says to himself, ‘Say, Valiant, /Say: High is my head!’(1-2). On other hand, Shelley’s, ‘Ode to the West Wind’, is a prayer to the spirit of west wind, the poet calls the west wind, ‘O Wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn’s being’(1). Shelley has started his poem with a mild expression, but Nazrul’s approach has loftiness, and roughness. It is the way of speaking which is seen in the speaking of God to men in the holy Quraan, or in the holy Bible. In the study of both poems, there is a description of cosmic journey. In “The Rebel”, the rebel claims:

Say: Ripping  
apart the wide sky of the universe  
Leaving behind the moon, the sun, the planets and the stars,

Piercing the earth and the heavens.

Pushing through Almighty's sacred seat (lines 6-9)

This is a text of anti-colonialism. The poet belonged to a colonized territory. In the disguise of aestheticism, the poet has claimed his own territory. The rebel is the poet himself. He is ferocious and he is the mightiest man. The rebel dares to defy the "Almighty", or the colonial authority. That is why, he can say, "Pushing through Almighty's sacred seat". This kind of writing is visible in other colonialist texts, e.g. African writer Césaire's anti-colonial poetry, Yeats's poetry of decolonization, and Fanon's counter narrative of anti-imperialist decolonization, etc. Imperialism begins when one loses one's land. Then they become humiliated in their own land. The winner of land begins to exploit the loser. So, imperialism is a form of geographical violence. Through this poetic recourse, Nazrul tries to recover his land from the British ruler.

Similarly, Shelley has set his poem sequentially in earth with graves, plains, and hills. Thus, poem is in five parts. In the **first section**, Shelley presents his double vision of the west wind: it heralds winter, death and decay, but at the same time out of this destruction will come 'new life'. It is like a beautiful woman who gives birth to a cute baby and loses her beauty for regeneration. So, revolution is necessary for reformation. In stanza one (Ode to the West wind), Shelley says, "the winged seeds, where they lie cold and low, / Each like a corpse within its grave, (7-8)". Here it seems that the poet imagines the seeds have wings. The reason is that the seeds are carried away from one place to another by seasonal wind in order to sprout planets. Here it is told that the west wind as the force of autumn shifts away the seeds in their grave, which is cold, and dark place once time. Again, the same west wind as the force of spring helps the seeds to come to life. The same spirit can have opposite binary images. One is violent, and the other is supportive. Moreover, the poet utters, 'Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill/ (Driving sweet buds like flock to feed in air)/ With living hues and odors plain and hill' (10-12). Here the poet imagines that the west wind as the shepherd is caring the buds like flock. Buds are visualized as sheep, which are being mildly stirred by the caressing of western breeze. It is also said that sweet buds are being feed in the air. Here the buds are seen as birds. It is natural when birds fly in the sky; they feed on air. The stanza covers the space of air, 'in the steep sky'. Here west wind dominates the sky. The upper part of the universe is in motion. Heaven is loosing clouds as trees are shedding leaves. The surface of sky is filled up by the 'Angels of rain and lightning' (18). 'Rain and lightning are harbingers of coming

storm. They are really angels, or prophets of destruction. Clouds are compared with locks or hair. Likewise, to describe the fierce image of the coming storm, these hairs are told to be the hairs of mad Maenad (the crazy devotee of Dionysus, the Greek god of wine, revelry, and vegetation). Her uncontrollable visage demonstrates the demonic force of the announcing storm. She is another metaphor for stating the theme of destruction and creation. The third stanza has been set on the sea. Here the ruling spirit of the west wind is upon the Mediterranean and the Atlantic.

Thou who didst waken from his summer dreams  
The blue Mediterranean, where he lay  
Lulled by the coil of his chrystalline streams, (lines 29-31)

Sea has been personified here. The west wind will awaken blue Mediterranean from its sleep, which has been sleeping under the enchantment of the spring wind. The sea knows the voice of the west wind. Here Shelley has structured his poem within four elements of creation: earth, air, water, and fire (the last element comes when there is the reference of lightning in the second stanza, and ashes and sparks in the last stanza). At the beginning of **section 4**, Shelley gathers together the main images of the poem- leaves, clouds, and waves- and introduces a speaking voice, an 'I', a personal focus and source for the poem's address to the wind. Shelley's lament at the end of this section comes close to self-pity. Overall, this lyric is a plea to the wind (mighty power) for liberation.

It has been already discussed that Shelley was unable to do anything for the helpless people of England. His mind was bleeding for his inability. It seems that the poet is in his autumn now. He has been broken down by "A heavy weight of hours", once who was untamed, swift, and proud like that of the west wind. Shelley thought that west wind was free. But the poet had no freedom like the west wind. West wind has both destructive and creative power, as Shelly says in the stanza four:

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear;  
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;  
A wave to pant beneath thy power, and share  
The impulse of thy strength, only less free (lines 43-46)

Thus, Shelley has broadcasted his ideology of destruction and creation using the binary images of nature as W.B. Yeats has focused this cycle of nature in his famous poem, "The Second

Coming”. Shelley’s philosophy of destruction and creation has also been used by Nazrul in his great creation, “The Rebel”.

Like Shelley, Nazrul has also focused on the different binary images of contradiction. He once says, “I am the burning volcano in the bosom of the earth/ I am the wild fire of the woods, / I am Hell’s mad terrific sea of wrath” (116-118) and utters, “I am Orpheus’ flute, / I bring sleep to the fevered world” (122-123). In this way, Nazrul has disclosed his balancing caliber. This technique displays the contradictory states of the reality like life and death, light and darkness, creation and destruction, movement and stillness, love and hatred, etc. These binary images exist side by side and one is essential for another. The rebel poet Kazi Nazrul Islam was against all kinds of barriers. The main policy of imperialists was “divide and rule”. In order to capture power, they had created division between Hindus and Muslims, Bengali and non-Bengali, and higher class and lower class. Nazrul wanted to establish the identity of one unique human being. So, he adapted mythical imagery from all religions. He has used at the same time Khuda (Creator according to Islam), Bhogowan (Creator according to Indian Vedic belief), Notoraj (Shiva, the Indian god who makes wild dance to destroy with a view to creating new), Israfil (the angel who would blow the final whistle to destroy the world as per Islamic belief), Taji borrak (the mighty celestial horse that took Prophet Mohammad to Allah), Uchchaishrava (A white sea horse, the vehicle of Indra). The poet is invincible in his forceful destruction. This destruction is for great beauty and love. It is the general process of displacement of old for new. He has emphasized on the globalization of human identity. Having built up a new universe, Nazrul will fly “the flag of triumph at the world”. This is the triumph of all humanity. Besides these, Nazrul will use Orpheus’s flute (Greek mythological figure) to remedy the illness of mother earth.

Nazrul’s ideology, which was built in “The Rebel”, was totally fruitful. British finally left India (Haider, 2016). On the course of war of freedom, Bangladesh has been freed from Pakistani rulers by Mukti Juddha. Afterwards, Nazrul was made the national poet of Bangladesh. Nazrul was the visionary of freedom. He focused on the future based on the past experiences. Talukder said (2016), “If we go through T. S. Eliot’s famous book entitled Tradition and the Individual Talent, it becomes clear that without taking elements from the past it is impossible to explore the present and focus on the future”. Nazrul dreamed for a better society which will be free of British rule, free of injustice, communalism and oppressions. Nazrul was unconsciously influenced by the

Revolutionary ideology of Western Romantics Byron and Percy Bysshe Shelley. His two poems “The Rebel (Bidrohi)” and “The Comet (Dhumketu)” roused the sense of sleeping proletariat of India. Nazrul is a born rebel who risks his life for the mass people of India.

### Conclusion

The two poems “The Rebel” and “Ode to the West Wind”, are the reflection of revolution against tyranny, inequality, superstition, corruption, racism, and exploitation of colonizers and the aristocratic against the colonized and the subaltern. Though there is a perceptible contrast between the two social political aspects of their respective creators, who were born in the middle of socio-political pandemonium in their own societies. Certainly, they were blessed by a conscious mindset and extra perception ability. For that reason, they could access the problem of society. In order to give birth to the new society; they had borne a philosophy of “destruction and creation”. It means the destruction of old for the sake of building a new one. It would be a painful and daring process. In fact, that sacrifice would be necessary for the suffering humanity to carry out ultimate betterment. It is the system of nature. This is the subject of Nazrul’s “The Rebel” and Shelley’s “Ode to the West Wind”. As a reformer and messenger of the society, both have seen revolutionary spirit as driving force for change. Revolution is the weapon of reformation. Without revolution, freedom cannot be achieved, whether it is political or social or individual. Poems like ‘Ode to the West Wind’ and ‘The Rebel’ are full of revolutionary fervours using metaphorical languages as the creators wanted to awaken the mass from the sleep and make them carry over the vision onwards. Thus, these creators are social activists, reformers, and nurturers of new seeds of revolution, inspiring freedom across generations.

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## Unveiling the Domestic: Gender, Desire, Sexuality, and Female Identity in Ismat Chughtai's *The Quilt: Stories*

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### Abstract

Ismat Chughtai's short stories, collected in *The Quilt: Stories*, mark a radical intervention in Urdu literature through their candid portrayal of women's lives, emotions, and desires. This paper examines selected stories—The Quilt, The Mole, The Homemaker, Touch-Me-Not, All Alone, Mother-in-Law, Roots, and The Invalid—to uncover how Chughtai situates the domestic sphere as both a site of confinement and a space of subtle resistance. Her narratives foreground women negotiating gender roles, repressed sexual desires, loneliness, and intergenerational conflicts within the household. At the same time, she exposes the complexities of class divisions and female relationships, revealing women not merely as victims but as individuals with agency, contradictions, and voice. By engaging with themes of gender, desire, sexuality, and identity, this study argues that Chughtai's stories destabilize conventional notions of morality and womanhood, offering a subversive reimagining of female subjectivity in twentieth-century South Asian society.

**Keywords:** Ismat Chughtai, *The Quilt: Stories*, domesticity, gender, desire, sexuality, female identity; feminism, Urdu literature.

### Introduction

Ismat Chughtai (1915–1991) is celebrated as one of the most uncompromising voices in twentieth-century Urdu literature. A bold stylist, a pioneering feminist, and a sharp social critic, Chughtai wrote against the grain of a conservative, patriarchal society that sought to restrict the roles of women to silence, obedience, and invisibility. Her fiction, often set within the seemingly ordinary domestic spaces of kitchens, bedrooms, courtyards, and verandas, reveals the complex realities of



women's lives—realities marked by longing, repression, negotiation, and subtle acts of resistance. (Sood, 37)

Her most famous story, *Lihaaf* (The Quilt), published in 1942, provoked widespread controversy and even obscenity charges in colonial India because of its daring portrayal of female desire outside the boundaries of heteronormativity. Yet *The Quilt* was not an isolated provocation but part of a larger project in Chughtai's fiction: the exploration of gender, sexuality, desire, and identity within the everyday lives of women. (Sood 38)

This paper examines selected short stories from *The Quilt and Other Stories*—including *The Quilt*, *The Mole*, *The Homemaker*, *Touch-Me-Not*, *All Alone*, *Mother-in-Law*, *Roots*, and *The Invalid*. Read together, these works reveal the “domestic” not as a private, apolitical space, but as a contested terrain where women confront restrictions and negotiate their own selfhood. Through irony, humour, realism, and daring candour, Chughtai articulates female voices that had long been silenced, offering alternative ways of imagining identity and agency.

The central argument of this paper is that Chughtai uses the domestic sphere to foreground the intersections of gender, desire, sexuality, and female identity. While her women are often trapped within patriarchal norms, they simultaneously resist, assert, and reimagine themselves—revealing both the suffocating power of tradition and the resilient force of individual agency.

### **Methodology**

This research is grounded in a qualitative and interpretive approach, guided by feminist literary criticism through close analytical method. Literature is not treated as autonomous from its social milieu but as deeply embedded in the cultural and political realities of its time. Chughtai's work, emerging in colonial and postcolonial South Asia, provides a fertile site for feminist analysis because it confronts issues of patriarchy, sexuality, and women's agency in both direct and subtle ways.

### **Feminist Framework**

The study draws on Simone de Beauvoir's notion of woman as “Other” (Abrahms124), Judith Butler's insights on gender as performative (Nayar 91), and Toril Moi's understanding of the term's ‘feminist’, ‘female’ and ‘feminine’ as political composition, a matter of biology and a set of culturally defined characteristics respectively (Barry 117). Contemporary feminist theory argues that female sexuality has been marginalized as insignificant or that representation of women body,

desire and sexuality have been made by men and feminist theorists use new models like psychoanalytical theories or devise radical feminism to promote sisterhood or female sexuality without men (Nayar 103). Together, these theoretical lenses illuminate how Chughtai represents women negotiating between social repression and individual desire.

### **Analytical Method**

The Present Study adopts the Analytical Method, where a close reading is the primary tool, focusing on plot, character, symbolism, and narrative style. The analysis also traces recurring motifs across stories, such as silence, secrecy, repression, and resistance, showing how Chughtai positions domestic life as both oppressive and transformative.

### **Gender Roles in the Domestic Sphere**

The domestic sphere in Ismat Chughtai's fiction is not a neutral haven but the very battleground where gender roles are imposed, contested, and redefined. The household, far from being merely a private space, mirrors the structures of patriarchal society, confining women within rigid expectations of duty, obedience, and silence. Yet, paradoxically, it is also the space where women improvise, subvert, and reshape their identities. Chughtai's fiction shows that the home is both a site of entrapment and a laboratory for resistance, where characters navigate the contradictions of domesticity in ways that unsettle rigid gender binaries.

In *The Homemaker*, Chughtai captures the paradox of domestic life with piercing clarity. Women are expected to maintain households yet receive neither recognition nor autonomy for their labour. Lajo, the protagonist, embodies this burden. Though she keeps her household running with painstaking effort, her identity is eclipsed by her husband's authority rather than bitten by him (Chughtai 60). Chughtai writes that "A woman's hands are never still, yet her worth is measured in silence" (Chughtai 59). This irony reveals how women's ceaseless contributions are normalized into invisibility. Rather than elevating her status, Lajo's diligence entrenches her dependence, reducing her to what Simone de Beauvoir would call "the other". Anticipating later feminist critiques, Chughtai exposes the undervaluation of women's work and the unjust distribution of domestic responsibilities.

The dynamics become even more complex in *Mother-in-Law*, where Chughtai dramatizes the maternal enforcement of patriarchy. The older woman, once a victim of oppression herself, assumes the role of disciplinarian over her daughter-in-law. Chughtai writes, "'May God ruin her!'

The mother-in-law cursed her bahu—the daughter-in-law—who was playing kabaddi and having fun with the urchins of the mohalla. Why would anyone wish to live if one had such a bahu, wondered the mother-in-law. Come noon and she is up on the roof. Hordes of boys and girls arrive. One can't get a wink of sleep" (Chughtai 117). Chughtai describes her transformation giving an example of "the whip that once lashed her is now in her own hands, and she wields it with vengeance" (Chughtai 123). This unsettling cycle illustrates how oppression reproduces itself across generations. The mother-in-law's authority is not empowerment but a distorted form of control that perpetuates patriarchal structures. By presenting women as both oppressors and victims, Chughtai dismantles simplistic binaries of male dominance and female subjugation, showing patriarchy as a system that ensnares women in roles that turn them against one another.

In *All Alone* and *Roots*, Chughtai explores the emotional and psychological costs of domestic conformity. Sylvia, the protagonist of *All Alone* lives a life hemmed in by silence: "Four walls, and nothing but the echo of my own breath" (Chughtai 103). Though materially secure, she is emotionally suffocated, her individuality eroded by isolation. In *Roots*, Farida the protagonist's desires for personal freedom are stifled by family traditions. Chughtai writes, "A woman's roots are not her own; they are planted by others, and she must grow where she is told" (Chughtai 133). Such imagery underscores the lack of autonomy granted to women whose identities are predetermined by patriarchal expectations. The home, meant to nurture, becomes instead a cage that denies self-determination.

Perhaps the most provocative engagement with domesticity appears in *The Quilt*. On the surface, it is the story of Begum Jaan, neglected by her Nawab husband who shows no interest in conjugal intimacy. Beneath this surface, however, lies a radical reconfiguration of domestic space. The begum's suppressed desires erupt into intimacy with her female companion, an act that challenges both patriarchal and heteronormative definitions of the household. "The other maids were jealous of Rabbu. The witch! She ate, sat and even slept with Begam Jan!" (Chughtai 19), Chughtai observes through her narrator. The quilt thus becomes a metaphor for the secret worlds of desire that thrive within the domestic sphere, worlds that unsettle the patriarchal ideal of the home as pure, orderly, and stable.

Yet Chughtai never portrays her women as passive sufferers. Even within constraint, they improvise strategies of survival and resistance. In *Mother-in-Law*, the younger woman resists

domination not through outright defiance but through subtle refusals—eating at odd hours, withholding speech, or asserting her choices quietly (Chughtai 123). These gestures, seemingly insignificant, destabilize the structures of control and highlight the everyday ways women negotiate oppressive systems. Similarly, in *The Homemaker*, Lajo reflects that “If a woman’s work is endless, so too is her capacity to imagine” (Chughtai 61). Such moments reveal that women’s imagination itself becomes a form of resistance against the suffocating confines of patriarchal domesticity.

Generational conflict is another recurring motif in Chughtai’s stories. Older women, having internalized patriarchal values, often become enforcers of tradition upon younger women. In *Mother-in-Law*, the older woman insists to hold on to the tradition like how it has always been, and this is how it must remain (Chughtai 122). Yet Chughtai subtly undermines such declarations, exposing them as constructs rather than inevitabilities. Tradition, she suggests, is not immutable but imposed—and therefore open to challenge.

Thus, the domestic sphere emerges in Chughtai’s fiction as a deeply ambivalent space. It is both prison and sanctuary, site of suffering and seedbed of defiance. In *The Quilt*, female intimacy becomes a quiet rebellion against neglect. In *Roots*, even unfulfilled dreams of self-determination testify to the yearning for autonomy. Chughtai’s women may not always break free, but their longings, ironies, and subtle acts of resistance complicate any attempt to read domesticity as either wholly tragic or wholly submissive.

Importantly, Chughtai avoids romanticizing the household. Her depictions of kitchens, bedrooms, and courtyards are neither sentimental nor purely despairing; they are rendered as dynamic spaces where power circulates and identities are contested. By drawing attention to everyday labour, hidden desires, and generational conflicts, she shows that the domestic is inherently political.

Moreover, Chughtai redefines the meaning of the domestic sphere. Rather than a passive backdrop to women’s lives, it is the very heart of patriarchal power—and therefore the stage on which resistance takes form. Through irony, nuance, and bold storytelling, she reveals how gender roles within the household are neither natural nor fixed but constantly negotiated. In doing so, she opens the possibility of reimagining domesticity as a site not only of entrapment but also of resilience, creativity, and transformation.

## Desire and Female Sexuality

In Ismat Chughtai's fiction, female desire and sexuality are not shameful aberrations to be silenced but legitimate, powerful forces that challenge patriarchal control and reshape women's identities. This assertion, bold in Chughtai's literary milieu, confronts the cultural insistence on female chastity, obedience, and silence. At a time when women were largely reduced to symbols of purity, Chughtai dared to present them as flesh-and-blood beings who hunger, long, and act upon their desires. Her candid portrayal destabilizes the patriarchal myths of womanhood and offers a vision of female subjectivity that includes not only suffering but also passion, yearning, and agency.

The most striking example is *The Quilt*, perhaps Chughtai's most controversial story. It depicts Begum Jaan's intimate relationship with her maid, Rabbu, foregrounding lesbian desire at a time when such a subject was taboo in Indian literature. Chughtai destabilizes heteronormative assumptions by showing that Begum Jaan's sexuality is not deviance but a response to neglect. Her husband, the Nawab, is indifferent to her physical and emotional needs, preferring to spend his nights with young men. Deprived of marital intimacy, Begum Jaan finds companionship, comfort, and desire in Rabbu's embrace. "Began Jaan's quilt was shaking vigorously, as though an elephant was struggling inside" (Chughtai 20), the child-narrator observes, her innocent perspective ironically highlighting the intensity of the unseen relationship beneath. By refusing to pathologize Begum Jaan's desire, Chughtai reframes sexuality as a vital part of female existence rather than an aberration. The begum's longing is not merely for physical gratification; it is also a quest for recognition, tenderness, and fulfillment—needs systematically denied by a patriarchal marriage.

In *Touch-Me-Not*, Chughtai turns to the complexities of sexual repression and bodily anxiety. Bhabhijan, the protagonist is haunted by fears of contamination and illness, anxieties rooted in cultural taboos around female sexuality. Her body becomes a site of both desire and dread, caught between instinct and prohibition. "She knew that another miscarriage would be her husband's ticket to a second marriage. Now bhaijan could do anything in the name of progeny," the narrator says. This ambivalence illustrates how patriarchal discourses police women's bodies, instilling guilt even in the most natural impulses. By narrating such experiences with candour, Chughtai exposes the hypocrisy of a culture that enforces silence on women while tolerating men's

indulgences. Her female characters, unlike their male counterparts, are burdened with shame for feeling desire at all. Yet by articulating these anxieties, Chughtai disrupts the silence, insisting that women's bodily experiences - whether pleasurable, anxious, or contradictory - are worthy of representation.

In Ismat Chughtai's "The Mole", desire and female sexuality are articulated through Rani's playful boldness and her unapologetic body-consciousness. By flaunting her mole and teasing Choudhry (Chughtai 28), she challenges the patriarchal expectation of female modesty. Her flirtatious banter, coupled with her awareness of her physicality, transforms the body into a site of agency rather than shame. Chughtai presents female desire as natural, uninhibited, and resistant to repression. Rani's refusal to be silenced highlights the subversive power of sexuality, exposing male hypocrisy while reclaiming pleasure and control over her own body. The mole becomes a metaphor for hidden yet assertive female desire.

Chughtai's stories also reclaim desire as a source of female solidarity and intimacy. In *The Quilt*, the relationship between Begum Jaan and Rabbu is not only physical but also a mode of survival against patriarchal neglect. The two women create a world of mutual care, tenderness, and shared vulnerability—something the Nawab's presence obliterates. By situating female desire within bonds of intimacy and companionship, Chughtai challenges the heteronormative assumption that only men can complete women's lives. Instead, she suggests that women's fulfilment may lie in connections beyond patriarchal marriage.

The treatment of desire in these stories also unsettles the cultural myth of the "pure, self-sacrificing woman." Chughtai's women are not passive victims of duty but complex individuals who yearn, resist, and negotiate. In *Touch-Me-Not*, the protagonist struggles with her anxieties but also insists, "The body cannot be severed from the soul, no matter how much we are taught to deny it." This assertion reclaims female sexuality as integral to identity rather than shameful excess. Likewise, in *The Quilt*, Begum Jaan's turn to Rabbu reconfigures desire as a survival strategy rather than a fall from virtue. Chughtai's women are not paragons of purity but flesh-and-blood beings who suffer, dream, and long, just as men do.

Importantly, Chughtai portrays female desire not as destructive but as transformative. In her fiction, repression leads to illness, isolation, and despair, while expression—though socially condemned—offers companionship, vitality, and dignity. In *The Mole*, Shaman's allure unsettles

but also liberates those around her from rigid conventions. In *The Quilt*, Begum Jaan's intimacy with Rabbu allows her to reclaim some semblance of life within the suffocating silence of her marriage. Desire becomes a force that both reveals oppression and gestures toward alternative ways of being.

Chughtai's style is equally significant. Her irony, wit, and refusal to moralize prevent her depictions of sexuality from descending into sensationalism. Even in *The Quilt*, which provoked accusations of obscenity, Chughtai's focus is not titillation but the exposure of social hypocrisy. The narrator's childlike innocence ensures that the reader sees the scene not as scandal but as truth hidden beneath cultural repression. Through irony, Chughtai turns taboo into critique, suggesting that what is silenced in polite society is often the most revealing of its contradictions.

By bringing female sexuality into the literary domain, Chughtai democratizes desire. No longer is the exclusive domain of men, desire in her stories equally legitimate for women. This was revolutionary in an era when cultural narratives demanded that women embody chastity, obedience, and sacrifice. By contrast, Chughtai's women articulate longing, act upon passion, and even defy convention in pursuit of fulfilment. As she writes in *Touch-Me-Not*, "To feel, to burn, to yearn—is not sin but life itself." Such declarations destabilize the patriarchal belief that female desire is unnatural or corrupt.

In this way, Chughtai's treatment of female desire and sexuality represents one of her most radical contributions to modern Urdu fiction. By portraying characters like Begum Jaan in *The Quilt*, Rani in *The Mole*, and the anxious protagonist of *Touch-Me-Not*, she challenges the cultural silencing of women's bodies and desires. Her women do not conform to the model of the pure, suffering wife but emerge as full human beings who long, suffer, resist, and imagine. In doing so, Chughtai reclaims sexuality as an essential dimension of female identity, unsettling patriarchal narratives that sought to erase it. Desire in her stories is not merely a private impulse but a political force—a challenge to silence, a refusal of shame, and a reassertion of women's right to be whole.

### **Female Identity and Resistance**

In Ismat Chughtai's fiction, female identity emerges not as a fixed essence dictated by patriarchy but as a fluid negotiation shaped by resistance, irony, and small acts of agency within oppressive domestic structures. Beyond gender roles and desire, her stories wrestle with the question of how women assert individuality in environments that deny them autonomy. Chughtai's protagonists



often resist being reduced to mere wives, mothers, or daughters, instead carving out selfhood in subtle but powerful ways. Their resistance is not always overt rebellion; sometimes it appears as irony, silence, withdrawal, or reimagining duty itself. In doing so, Chughtai redefines female identity as something constantly in flux, born out of conflict and negotiation.

In *The Invalid*, Chughtai explores the paradox of identity formed through physical frailty. The protagonist's illness renders her a burden within the household but also offers a peculiar freedom. Because she is an "invalid," she is excused from relentless domestic duties that define other women's lives. Chughtai notes, that her weakness shackled her body, but her hands were not tied to endless chores (Chughtai 114). Here, physical confinement paradoxically opens space for reflection, imagination, and resistance to the drudgery of patriarchal expectations. The character's frailty thus becomes both limitation and agency. This duality reflects Chughtai's nuanced vision of identity—not simply liberation versus oppression but a negotiation between the two, where women discover cracks in the structures that constrain them.

Similarly, *Roots* depicts a woman caught in the tension between tradition and modernity, exposing the dislocations of generational change. The protagonist struggles to reconcile inherited customs with her longing for personal independence. "A woman's roots are planted by others," she reflects, "but the branches ache toward the sky" (Chughtai 138). The metaphor illustrates how female identity is shaped by family, culture, and history yet still yearns for growth beyond those confines. Her resistance lies not in violent rupture but in refusing to let inherited roles completely define her. Chughtai thereby highlights how women's identities are never solely personal but also historical, shaped by time, place, and tradition.

In *All Alone*, Chughtai gives us another perspective on resistance through alienation. The protagonist lives within the suffocating boundaries of the home yet finds herself emotionally estranged. Four walls and silence were her companions (Chughtai 105), the narrative observes, capturing both her imprisonment and her refusal to dissolve into dutiful invisibility. Solitude here is double-edged: it isolates her but also preserves her individuality against relentless domestic demands. By choosing silence, she resists the endless chatter of patriarchal authority. Chughtai thus portrays alienation not simply as suffering but as a strategy of survival—an insistence on selfhood in a world determined to erase it.

Irony and humour are among Chughtai's most powerful tools for dramatizing resistance.



By mocking the hypocrisies of social norms, she gives her women the ability to undermine patriarchal authority even when direct defiance is impossible. In *Mother-in-Law*, for instance, the younger woman's quiet refusals—refusing to eat at the prescribed time or keeping her thoughts to herself—become subtle but potent gestures of identity (Chughtai 122). Silence is used as a weapon to speak. Here, resistance is not dramatic but nonetheless transformative, a way of asserting selfhood in a space where voice is denied.

In *The Homemaker*, Lajo's struggle epitomizes the entrapment of female identity within domestic labour. Yet even as she tirelessly works, she questions the meaning of her existence: "If my worth is measured in cooked meals and clean floors, what is left of me?" (Chughtai 48). This piercing self-awareness itself becomes resistance, for it prevents total submission to prescribed roles. Though her work remains unacknowledged, her inner questioning resists patriarchal erasure, keeping alive the possibility of reimagining what it means to be a woman beyond duty.

Chughtai also portrays resistance in unexpected ways - through desire itself. In *The Quilt*, Begum Jaan's intimacy with Rabbu is not only about sexuality but also about identity. Denied recognition by her husband, she asserts selfhood through a relationship that gives her companionship and affirmation. The quilt that covers them becomes a metaphor for a hidden world where female identity flourishes outside patriarchal approval. Chughtai deliberately frames this not as scandal but as survival, showing how marginalized women invent spaces of belonging where none are offered.

What unites these diverse portraits is Chughtai's refusal to depict identity as static. Instead, she insists that women's identities are always in flux, shaped by oppression yet never wholly defined by it. For example, in *The Invalid*, illness is both confinement and freedom. In *Roots*, tradition is both anchor and obstacle. In *All Alone*, silence is both alienation and agency. In each case, identity is forged in the paradoxes of daily life, revealing that even under constraint, women can carve out spaces for individuality.

Chughtai's irony further amplifies this vision. By exposing the absurdities of patriarchy, she empowers her women to resist even in small ways. One character quips, "They say a woman is the pillar of the home—but who builds pillars only to lock them in cages?" Such satirical remarks highlight the contradictions of cultural norms and give voice to a collective female frustration. Resistance, in Chughtai's hands, often takes the form of humour—laughter that punctures the

solemnity of patriarchal authority.

At the same time, Chughtai acknowledges the costs of resistance. Her women often face loneliness, alienation, or ridicule. In *All Alone*, solitude weighs heavily on the protagonist, yet it remains preferable to the suffocation of complete conformity. In *The Quilt*, Begum Jaan's relationship with Rabbu must remain hidden, spoken only in whispers and seen only in shadows. Chughtai refuses to idealize resistance; she portrays it as fraught, partial, and difficult. Yet this very realism underscores her point: female identity is forged not in pure freedom but in the messy, painful negotiations of daily survival.

Through these depictions, Chughtai demonstrates that female identity is never silent, even when women themselves appear marginalized. Their silences, ironies, longings, and refusals all testify to their enduring presence. As she writes in *The Invalid* that Weakness is not voicelessness, sometimes it whispers more loudly than strength (Chughtai 113) Such moments reveal Chughtai's radical vision: women may be constrained, but they are never without identity, and never without the possibility of resistance.

In this way, Chughtai's fiction redefines female identity as dynamic, contested, and resilient. Whether through frailty, solitude, irony, or desire, her women assert individuality against patriarchal erasure. By portraying characters like the invalid who turns weakness into agency, the woman in *Roots* who seeks growth beyond tradition, and the protagonist of *All Alone* who embraces silence as defiance, Chughtai insists that women's selfhood cannot be extinguished. Identity, in her stories, is a constant negotiation between oppression and resistance, between silence and speech, between tradition and transformation. Through irony and fearless storytelling, she ensures that her women - though constrained - are never voiceless. Instead, they emerge as complex individuals whose resilience challenges patriarchal structures and reclaim female identity as a living, evolving force.

## Conclusion

Ismat Chughtai's short stories are remarkable not only for their literary artistry but also for their fearless exploration of women's lives within the domestic sphere. By examining gender roles, desire, sexuality, and female identity, her fiction reveals how the household—often dismissed as a private, apolitical domain—functions as a site of power, repression, and transformation.

The stories analyzed—*The Quilt*, *The Mole*, *The Homemaker*, *Touch-Me-Not*, *All Alone*,

Mother-in-Law, Roots, and The Invalid—show that domesticity is never neutral. It is charged with contradictions: a place of care and confinement, of repression and resistance, of silence and speech. Chughtai's characters embody these contradictions, living lives marked by longing, shame, defiance, and resilience. By giving voice to their experiences, Chughtai destabilizes patriarchal narratives and expands the possibilities of female subjectivity in literature.

In unveiling the domestic, Chughtai achieves more than provocation—she reimagines the very boundaries of women's existence. Her stories affirm that the personal is indeed political, and that within kitchens and bedrooms lie struggles as significant as those on the public stage. For this reason, her fiction continues to resonate across generations, offering enduring insights into the complexities of gender, desire, sexuality, and identity.

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**Navigating Identity and Cultural Discourse in *The Mistress of Spices* by  
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**Abstract**

This paper explores Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *The Mistress of Spices* (1997) through the lens of identity displacement, set against the framework of postcolonial discourse. The narrative delves into the complexities of cultural dislocation and identity crises, embodying the tensions between traditional Indian cultural heritage and modern Western ideologies. The protagonist navigates between her responsibilities as *The Mistress of Spices* and her personal aspirations. The alternation between these dual realms highlights the inherent struggle faced by diasporic individuals attempting to reconcile competing, cultural frameworks. This study employs a qualitative research methodology and combines thematic analysis with close textual reading to examine how Divakaruni uses magical realism to illuminate the complexities of identity and resistance in a globalized society. Finally, this paper aims to attempt a perspective on the immigrant experience, showing how personal and cultural identities are continually reshaped in the face of displacement and change.

**Keywords:** Diaspora, Identity Crisis, Magical Realism, Post colonialism, Cultural discourse.

### **Introduction:**

In *The Mistress of Spices*, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni constructs a narrative structure that embodies elements of magical realism, exploring the multifaceted processes of identity formation and the cultural discussions faced by immigrants in the United States. Set against the backdrop of a spice shop located in Oakland, California, the novel centers on Tilo, an Indian woman possessed of the extraordinary ability to heal and empower others through the application of spices. The shop transcends its role as a simple commercial establishment; it emerges as a sanctuary, where in Tilo assists her customers in navigating their cultural problems and personal challenges. This setting serves as a sophisticated framework through which Divakaruni critically investigates the details of cultural adaptation, the conservation of heritage, and the stability that immigrants often struggle to achieve between adaptation and the preservation of their identities.

The central theme of *The Mistress of Spices* is the theory of diasporic identity which underscores the tensions and experienced by individuals as they navigate multiple cultural landscapes. The narrative explains the struggle natural in existing between one's native cultural context and the cultural background of the country, a pattern that resonates deeply within colonial literature. As articulated by Homi K Bhabha, immigrant identity is frequently constructed within “the space in-between,” a phenomenon he delineates as the “Third Space” (Bhabha, 1994). In the character of Tilo, this concept of in-between is vividly realized; she represents the struggle between her commitment to Indian cultural traditions symbolized through her service to the spices and her growing aspiration for a self-observations existence that contests the limitations imposed by her initial identity as a mistress of spices. The constraints associated with her role force her to surrender personal relationships and desires; however, her interactions with customers and her romantic involvement with a non-Indian man ignite within her a desire for autonomy and independence.

The cultural discourse within the novel explains the tension between tradition and modernity. Spices function as cultural signifiers that connect Tilo and her client to their Indian heritage, where in each spice embodies not only medicinal attributes but also spiritual and cultural significance. Through these spices, Tilo serves as a agent for bridging cultural divides, providing guidance to

individuals grappling with cultural displacement or alienation within the context of the United States. Tilo's journey emphasizes the necessity for cultural evolution; her unwavering observance to the mystical belief governing the spices ultimately disrupts her personal development. Her eventual disobedience of these limitations serves as an unspoken critique of rigid cultural norms that may inhibit individual agency among diasporic communities.

The novel's employment of magical realism amplifies these themes, weaving a rich tapestry where identity, tradition, and self-determination interrelate and combine. Confronted with cultural expectations and personal aspirations, *The Mistress of Spices* encourages readers to contemplate the notion that identity is not a static construct but rather a dynamic process shaped by both ancestral connections and contemporary experiences. In her ultimate decision to forge a life of her own making, Tilo embodies the resilience and adaptability central to diasporic identity, thereby reminding readers of the transformative potential embedded in the experience of navigating between cultures.

In the novel *The Mistress of Spices* protagonist, Tilo, embodies a constant negotiation between her traditional Indian identity and the multicultural environment that surrounds her. This tension expresses the challenges encountered by numerous immigrants who find themselves balancing the honor of their cultural heritage with the necessity of adapting to their host society. Tilo's journey serves as a symbol for the struggle between heritage and assimilation, while her designation as the "Mistress of Spices" signifies the considerable cultural responsibilities she bears. As Tilo articulates, "*I am only a Mistress of Spices. I can deal in ingredients to help them find what they want. But I cannot, must not, desire myself*" (Divakaruni, 1997, p. 72). This statement reveals her internal commitment to sort out the needs of others over her own aspirations, highlighting the sacrificial element of her identity that constrains her to traditional cultural roles.

Tilo's healing work through spices transcends the realm of cultural service; it symbolizes her profound connection to Indian culture and its mystical traditions. Each spice in her shop represents an aspect of Indian heritage, which she employs to assist her customers in navigating their identity crisis. For instance, when a young girl, struggling with cultural expectations and the desire to fit into her school environment, seeks Tilo's guidance, Tilo offers turmeric. She elucidates its dual

properties of protection and empowerment: *“The turmeric root, deep and gold like the sun on an Indian afternoon, will banish fear and grant her courage”* (Divakaruni, 1997, p. 91). This moment exemplifies Tilo’s utilization of traditional cultural knowledge to bridge the divide between the girl’s heritage and her emerging American identity. In doing so, she facilitates a sense of belonging that transcends a purely binary existence rather than being wholly Indian or wholly American, it becomes a harmonious combination of both identities.

According to Homi Bhabha’s concept of the “Third Space” is integral to the analysis of Tilo’s interactions with her customers as well as her own evolving sense of self. Bhabha posits that identity for diasporic individuals is cultivated within a marginal “Third Space”, a cultural space that exists between two distinct cultures, thereby facilitating the emergence of hybrid identities (Bhabha, 1994). The conceptual framework allows for an interpretation of identity that effortlessly incorporates elements from both the homeland and the host culture. Tilo’s shop epitomizes a “Third Space”, serving as a haven for Indian immigrants to mediate their cultural conflicts and forge new identities that intertwine aspects of their past with contemporary realities. Within this space, Tilo fulfills her role as a cultural healer while simultaneously acting as a confidante for individuals grappling with the complexities of life in America.

Through Tilo’s encounters, Divakaruni illuminates the diverse nature of the immigrant experience, showcasing varying degrees of attachment to cultural heritage. For instance, Tilo encounters Jagjit, a young Sikh boy who endures racism and bullying at school due to his cultural appearance. In response, she offers him *“the hot and bitter spices of India”*, a gesture intended to fill him with strength while subtly encouraging a resistance to pressures to conform and an embrace of pride in his cultural identity (Divakaruni, 1997, p. 120). This interaction underscores Divakaruni’s exploration of cultural resilience, highlighting the notion that while immigrants must navigate adaptation to new environments, maintaining a connection to one’s heritage can serve as a vital source of inner strength.

A central element of Tilo’s identity journey lies in the conflict between the obligations inherent her role as the Mistress of Spices and her personal desires particularly regarding her romantic involvement with Raven, a Native American man. This relationship serves as a challenge to her



commitment to tradition, symbolizing the allure of individual freedom and the possibility of self-definition beyond cultural constraints. Tilo's romance with Raven emerges as a central theme in her journey, prompting her to critically examine the limitations imposed by her designated role. She candidly expresses (Divakaruni, 1997, p. 185). Through this confession, Divakaruni underscores the broader tension between cultural obligations and personal fulfillment an experience that resonates within immigrant narratives, where characters frequently grapple with the dichotomy of familial expectations versus individual aspirations.

Raven embodies a parallel narrative of cultural alienation; as a Native American, he too navigates the peripheries of mainstream American society. His identity becomes a conduit for Tilo, demonstrating that it is feasible to honor one's heritage while simultaneously embracing new facets of oneself. Raven expressively asserts, "*We are both homeless, you and I...maybe that's why we found each other*" (Divakaruni, 1997, p. 223). Their connection invites Tilo to view herself as more than merely a cultural intermediary; it encourages her to acknowledge and pursue her own desires. This journey culminates in her momentous decision to depart from the spice shop and the responsibilities that tether her. This choice signifies her liberation from a life dictated solely by duty, enabling her to step into a self-defined identity that transcends her initial role.

A significant aspect of Tilo's identity journey is rooted in the profound conflict between the obligations imposed by her as the Mistress of Spices and her personal desires, particularly her love for Raven, a Native American man. This relationship presents a challenge to her commitment to tradition, epitomizing the allure of individual freedom and the possibility of self-definition beyond cultural constraints. Tilo's romantic involvement with Raven becomes a pivotal element of her journey, compelling her to question the boundaries established by her traditional role. She expresses her internal struggle by stating, "*I am ashamed to feel it, but I want to know what lies beyond the spices and the walls of my shop*" (Divakaruni, 1997, p. 185). In this moment, Divakaruni elucidates the broader tension between cultural obligations and personal fulfillment, a recurrent theme within immigrant narratives where characters frequently grapple with the dichotomy between familial expectations and individual aspirations.

In *The Mistress of Spices*, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni offers a nuanced exploration of identity,

cultural discourse, and self-empowerment through the character of Tilo. As Tilo navigates her role within the Indian immigrant community alongside her personal aspirations, she exemplifies the complexities inherent in diasporic identity straddling the line between honoring her cultural roots and embracing the inevitable transformations that accompany change. Her interactions with her customers illuminate the diverse experiences of immigrants, ranging from those who resist cultural assimilation to those actively seeking new identities within the “Third Space” of hybrid cultural existence. Ultimately, Tilo’s evolution from a duty-bound Mistress to an autonomous woman serves as a broader commentary on the significance of self-determination, highlighting the for identity to evolve beyond inherited cultural norms. Divakaruni’s narrative poignantly conveys that identity is not a fixed entity; rather, it is fluid and shaped by personal experiences, cultural interactions, and the bravery to reimagine oneself.

### **Literature review:**

*The Mistress of Spices* by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni frequently emphasizes its exploration of themes such as diasporic identity, cultural discourse, and gender dynamics, alongside its employment of magical realism as an instrument for examining these intricate issues. The novel has garnered extensive critical analysis within postcolonial and feminist theoretical frameworks, as scholars attempt explain how Divakaruni addresses psychological and social challenges confronted by immigrant communities, particularly South women, within the diaspora.

A central theme in *The Mistress of Spices* is the construction of diasporic identity, a topic that has attracted significant academic inquiry. Homi Bhabha’s theory of cultural hybridity posits that identity in the diaspora often emerges in a “Third Space,” where elements from both the homeland and host culture amalgamate to form new, hybrid identities (Bhabha, 1994). Scholars such as Suzanne Ferriss underscore how Tilo’s spice shop represents this Third Space, functioning as a site of negotiation between Indian cultural traditions and American social realities (Ferriss, 2002). In this context, Tilo operates as both a guardian of Indian cultural practices and a facilitator who aids her immigrant customers in navigating their personal and cultural dilemmas. Ferriss contends that Divakaruni’s depiction of Tilo’s role as a healer serves as a metaphor for the ways in which diasporic individuals reconcile “multiple and conflicting elements of their identities” (Ferriss,

2002, p. 45).

Magical realism functions as a pivotal element in examination of identity and cultural negotiation, facilitating a narrative that merges fantasy with reality and thereby creates a space that encapsulates the complexities of immigrant life. Critic Wendy B. Faris argues that magical realism, particularly in works such as *The Mistress of Spices*, provides an effective framework for articulating the cultural and psychological tensions omnipresent within diasporic communities (Faris, 2004). Faris posits that the genre's synthesis of the supernatural with everyday experiences reflects the duality felt by immigrants, who often find themselves caught between the traditions of their homeland and the realities confronting them in a new country. In this context, the spices in the novel, endowed with magical properties, symbolize both the allure of tradition and the possibilities for cultural transformation, enabling Tilo to navigate her roles as a cultural preserver and a mediator within her community (Faris, 2004).

Numerous scholars investigate how Divakaruni utilizes Tilo's interactions with her customers to depict the diversity of the immigrant experience, highlighting the varied responses to cultural displacement and identity formation within the South Asian diaspora. Susmita Sundaram argues that Tilo's relationships with her customers exemplify the spectrum of immigrant experiences, ranging from individuals who steadfastly adhere to traditional values to those who actively seek to forge new identities within American society (Sundaram, 2012). Sundaram observes that Tilo's guidance serves as a crucial navigational tool for her customers, assisting them in resolving personal conflicts related to their cultural identities and enabling them to adapt in ways that honor both their heritage and the exigencies of their new environment (Sundaram, 2012). This dynamic, Sundaram asserts, reinforces Divakaruni's representation of the immigrant community as a site of cultural negotiation and identity transformation, wherein individuals must navigate the tensions between the desire to assimilate and the imperative to preserve their cultural roots.

In *The Mistress of Spices*, Divakaruni utilizes Tilo's narrative to illuminate the complexities of the immigrant experience, particularly as it pertains to women who often grapple with distinct pressures to adhere to both cultural and gendered expectations. Through the lens of magical realism, Divakaruni examines the processes by which identity is constructed and reconstructed

within the diasporic community, presenting readers with a nuanced depiction of the challenges and rewards associated with navigating life between cultures.

This literature review combines key learned perspectives on *The Mistress of Spices*, employing postcolonial to contextualize the novel's investigation of identity, cultural hybridity, and gender. It incorporates sources that discuss magical realism as a narrative device utilized to portray the immigrant experience while emphasizing the diverse experiences within the South Asian diaspora in America.

### **Research Methodology:**

This study employs a qualitative, interpretative approach to analyze *The Mistress of Spices* by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, with an emphasis on themes of identity, cultural discourse, hybridity and gender. Through close reading and textual analysis, the research scrutinizes how the narrative structures, character development, and employment of magical realism interconnect and illuminate the complexities of diasporic identity and cultural negotiation.

The primary method employed in this research is textual, which require a thorough examination of language, symbolism, and narrative devices present in *The Mistress of Spices*. This close reading approach aims to find out the mechanisms by which Divakaruni utilizes the novel's setting, characters, and magical elements to articulate the internal and external conflicts faced by diasporic individuals. Particular emphasis is placed on the depiction of Tilo's dual role as both a cultural mediator and a woman navigating her personal desires within a new social landscape. Key passages are scrutinized to identify how the spices function as metaphors for cultural memory, identity preservation, and the hybrid identities of immigrants. Furthermore, the analysis considers how Tilo's transformation from a position of acceptance to one of autonomy underscores the novel's feminist themes.

Textual analysis also facilitates an exploration of the narrative strategies, particularly her implementation of magical realism to underscore the cultural themes woven throughout the novel. By concentrating on both symbolic and thematic elements, this study examines how the narrative structure embodies the tension between traditional expectations and the evolving identities of

immigrants in the United States. Passages that depict Tilo's interactions with her customers, her commitment to the rules governing the spices, and her relationship with Raven are closely analyzed to interpret how these dynamics resonate with and reflect broader themes of cultural hybridity, belonging, and self-determination.

This study is grounded in postcolonial theory, particularly Homi K Bhabha's concept of the "Third Space," which is employed to interpret Tilo's role within her community and the evolution of her sense of self. Bhabha's theory asserts that immigrant identity is constructed within a hybrid space where cultural elements intersect, giving rise to new, fluid identities that question fixed notions of belonging (Bhabha, 1994). This framework is crucial for analyzing how Tilo's spice shop operates as a "Third Space," facilitating cultural negotiation that empowers both her and her customers to confront and reconcile their dual identities. Through this perspective, the research examines how Tilo navigates her Indian cultural heritage alongside the multifaceted influences of American society, embodying a hybrid identity that challenges simplistic binary notions of culture.

The present study employs a multi-dimensional methodological framework to elucidate the intricate layers of meaning embedded within Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's novel, *The Mistress of Spices*, with particular emphasis on the text's engagement with themes of identity, culture, and gender. By integrating textual analysis, along with postcolonial and feminist theoretical perspectives and relevant secondary literature, this research endeavors to provide a comprehensive understanding of how the novel navigates the complexities inherent in diasporic existence and the multifaceted challenges associated with cultural adaptation. This methodological approach not only underscores the novel's contributions to postcolonial and feminist discourse but also accentuates the broader implications of identity formation within a multicultural framework.

This methodology section delineates the analytical strategies employed to scrutinize *The Mistress of Spices*, incorporating techniques such as close reading alongside theoretical frameworks and secondary scholarship. It specifically accentuates the examination of thematic elements through the lenses of postcolonial and feminist theory, thereby developing a holistic strategy for analyzing the treatment of cultural and gender identities.

## Results and Findings:

The critical analysis of *The Mistress of Spices* reveals that the novel offers a sophisticated exploration of immigrant identity, the negotiation of culture, and the empowerment of women, particularly within the context of the South Asian diaspora in the United States. Through an interpretation of the symbolism, character development, and thematic structures present in the narrative, this study reveals how Divakaruni critiques conventional expectations, examines the dynamics of cultural hybridity, and portrays the intricacies of self-determination. The findings are categorized into three overarching themes: the significance of cultural memory and hybridity in diasporic identity, the intersection of cultural and gendered constraints, and the symbolic role of magical realism in elucidating the struggles faced by immigrants.

A notable finding of this analysis is Divakaruni's depiction of the immigrant experience as an ongoing negotiation between cultural memory and adaptive practices. The protagonist, Tilo, exemplifies this tension as she endeavors to reconcile her role as a custodian of Indian cultural heritage with the expectations and influences prevalent in her new American milieu. Her spice shop emerges as both a real and symbolic "Third Space" wherein she and her clients struggle with the dual pulls of tradition and the necessity of adaptation, embodying Homi K. Bhabha's concept of the "Third Space" of cultural hybridity (Bhabha, 1994).

Throughout the narrative, the novel underscores the centrality of cultural memory in the lives of diasporic individuals. Each spice Tilo employs to assist her clients serves as a conduit to their Indian heritage, safeguarding cultural customs, and providing solace in the face of adversities such as racism, isolation, and cultural alienation. For instance, when Tilo offers turmeric to a young girl facing discrimination at school, she invokes the spice's traditional suggestions of protection and healing, thereby empowering the girl to embrace her cultural identity within a foreign environment (Divakaruni, 1997, p. 91). This action reflects Divakaruni's assertion that cultural preservation can serve as a vital source of strength for immigrants, facilitating the maintenance of self-identity while navigating a new cultural landscape.

Nevertheless, the novel also illuminates the inherent fluidity associated with cultural hybridity, as Tilo's journey encapsulates the necessity for both personal and cultural adaptation. By synthesizing elements of her Indian heritage with her experiences in America, Tilo ultimately

builds a new identity that transcends a binary classification of Indian or American, emerging instead as an evolving combination of both. This hybrid identity becomes particularly evident as she begins to question her strict adherence to the spices' regulations, permitting herself to develop a relationship with Raven, a Native American character who similarly navigates issues of cultural dislocation. This study posits that hybrid identities empower individuals to reconcile their historical contexts with contemporary realities, fostering a dynamic self-concept that is capable of flourishing within pluralistic settings.

The analysis further reveals that the novel involvement of magical realism significantly enriches the narrative's exploration of cultural identity and the emotional landscapes of the immigrant experience. The spices serve as routes for Tilo's mystical abilities, allowing her to build connections with her customers and address their numerous struggles. This magical dimension serves as a metaphor for the resilience and adaptability inherent in cultural heritage, as Tilo's engagement with the spices illustrates how traditional knowledge can offer guidance and comfort in unfamiliar surroundings.

Moreover, the magical realism in *The Mistress of Spices* reflects the psychological complexities of diasporic existence, interweaving the fantastical with the routine to capture the common sense of "otherness" often experienced by immigrants. Each spice embodies a specific cultural memory, such as the comforting familiarity of turmeric's healing properties or the protective essence of red chili. By invoking these symbols, Divakaruni skillfully utilizes magical realism to articulate the unique challenges faced by immigrants who remain "enchanted" by their memories of home while contending with the realities of their new cultural landscapes. Sangeeta Ray observes that magical realism acts as a conduit connecting cultural memory with contemporary identity, enabling characters like Tilo to navigate their cultural dislocation while maintaining ties to their heritage (Ray, 2003).

Additionally, Divakaruni's incorporation of magical realism allows for an exploration of the "impossible" choices confronting Tilo as she seeks to reconcile her role as a cultural healer with her longing for personal fulfillment. The "rules of the spices" that prohibit Tilo from forging attachments or acting out of individual desire function as a metaphor for the constraints imposed

by cultural and societal norms. By ultimately defying these mystical edicts, Tilo symbolically rejects both traditional and gender-based constraints, embracing an identity that she defines for herself and that transcends the limitations established by her cultural heritage.

The findings of this study illustrate that *The Mistress of Spices* is a richly layered narrative that engages profoundly with the themes of identity, cultural negotiation, and female empowerment. Through her portrayal of Tilo, Divakaruni critiques the gendered expectations assigned to immigrant women and probes the transformative potential of cultural hybridity. The novel posits that identity within the diaspora is not a static construct but rather an evolving amalgamation of past and present, one that permits individuals to redefine themselves in the context of their multifaceted experiences.

### **Conclusion:**

This paper skillfully navigates themes of identity, cultural discourse, and self-determination, providing a multidimensional portrayal of the immigrant experience. Through the protagonist, Tilo, this study examines the tensions that arise from cultural hybridity, as Tilo straddles the divide between her Indian heritage and her new life in the United States. This dichotomy is vividly represented through the symbolism of the spices, which serve as both tools of empowerment and anchors to her traditional role as a cultural caretaker. As Tilo gradually challenges the rules governing her identity, Divakaruni critiques rigid cultural expectations and highlights the possibility of evolving beyond them. In the novel use of magical realism amplifies this exploration, allowing her to convey the emotional intensity of Tilo's struggles with both cultural and gendered constraints. Tilo's journey ultimately illustrates that identity in the diaspora is not fixed; rather, it is a constantly evolving fusion of past and present influences. Her relationship with Raven, a Native American man who embodies his own complexities of cultural identity, is particularly significant, as it allows Tilo to question and eventually defy the restrictive traditions imposed on her. The novel thus supports that cultural negotiation involves both respect for one's roots and openness to self-reinvention. Through *The Mistress of Spices*, Divakaruni contributes to postcolonial and feminist discourse, underscoring the importance of self-empowerment and autonomy for diasporic individuals, particularly women. Finally, the novel celebrates the resilience



and adaptability of immigrant identity, affirming that cultural hybridity allows for both stability and freedom.

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## **Tweeting the Violence Narratives in Nigeria: A Critical Stylistic Study of Tweets on the Benue Massacre**

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### **Abstract**

Violence, insecurity, and brutal killings have become urgent issues in Nigeria, capturing the attention of social scientists. This study critically examines the violence narratives in Nigeria, focusing on the linguistic strategies used in X discourse to narrate and frame the Yelewata Benue massacre. The aim is to analyse the linguistic techniques in tweets that depict and frame the Benue massacre, and investigate how victims, perpetrators, and government actions are portrayed through critical stylistic devices. Using a qualitative approach, the study applies Jeffrie's (2010) model of Critical Stylistics as its analytical framework. The analysis concentrates on five carefully selected tweets to explore how they report, resist, accuse, call for action, and criticise the government and public responses to the Yelewata massacre. The results indicate that tweets tend to highlight victims through quantification and emotional language, while perpetrators are often referenced indirectly or directly labelled. Governmental actors are depicted unfavourably due to their silence and negligence in fulfilling their primary duty to protect citizens. Contextualising the discourse within Nigeria's socio-political landscape, the study underscores the role of critical stylistics in unveiling how digital narratives of violence depict power, responsibility, and collective grief. It concludes that X functions as a space for communal outrage, mourning, and political critique, employing language and stylistic devices to shape Nigeria's fractured reality.

**Keywords:** Tweeting, Violence, Narratives, Nigeria, Critical Stylistics, X, Tweets, Massacre, Benue State.

### **Introduction**

Violence and insecurity have become a recurring menace in Nigeria, establishing the government's inability to uphold its constitutional obligations to its citizens. Chapter four section 33(1), 34(1), and 53(1) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999, ensure that life, dignity, and liberty of citizens are to be protected from unlawful harm by the state, supported by the

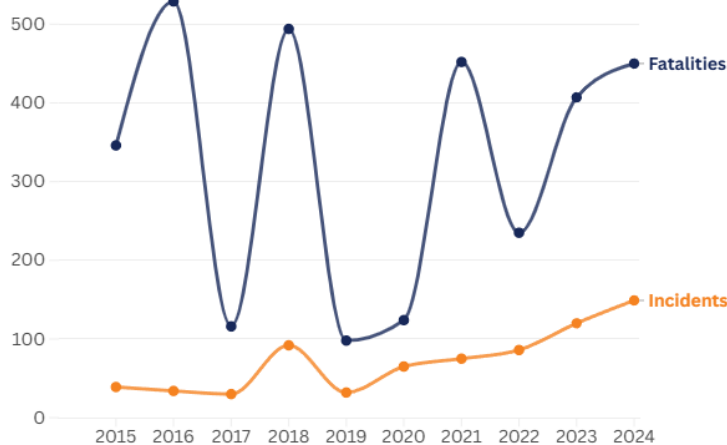
following statements. Section 33(1): “*Every person has a right to life, and no one shall be deprived intentionally of his life...*”. Section 34(1): “*...no person shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment...*”. Section 35(1): “*...every person shall be entitled to his personal liberty...*”. These sections ensure no citizen of Nigeria is to be deprived of life unlawfully, prohibiting torture, inhuman degradation, slavery of any sort, or forced labor. Thereby placing a duty on the state to protect citizens' physical and psychological well-being. Despite these acts, violence and insecurity have prevalently escalated, becoming regular headlines in the daily news. The continuous disregard for life by some sovereigns in their quest for power suggests a weakness in the universal legal instruments for the protection of the right to life (Onuegbulam & Ani, 2024). Nigerians continue to suffer as armed violence and brutal killings have taken the lead in the country’s list of security challenges, others include: kidnapping, armed robbery, drug trafficking and abuse, banditry, militancy, communal clash, and many other forms of violence, demonstrating the disconnect between what is expected of the state and what is attainable. Yakubu et al. (2025) emphasise that “recurring cycle of violence threatens the legitimacy of democratic institutions and processes.”

Violence is an inevitable part of human existence (Mathew & Chijioke, 2023; Aluya & Terver, 2024). It is a behaviour involving physical force intended to hurt, damage, or kill someone or something. At the same time, insecurity is simply the state of being open or exposed to danger, threat, or any form of harm, creating a lack of protection. Nigerians now live in fear of violence lurking around. The chances of going a day without danger or violent attacks have become very slim. Europa Institute for Gender Equality establishes that violence is “any intentional course of conduct that seriously impairs another person's psychological integrity through coercion or

threats.” The country's economic stability is significantly impacted as farmers are unable to access their farmlands, and citizens are hesitant to travel or pursue economic and business opportunities. In 2018, the Nigerian Bureau of Statistics recorded one hundred and thirty-four thousand six hundred and sixty-three (134,663) cases of violent acts in Nigeria. These violent cases were categorized into three: violence against property, persons, and against lawful authorities. With a total number of sixty-eight thousand five hundred and seventy-nine recorded cases, violence against property ranked highest. Fifty-three thousand six hundred and forty-one violent cases against persons were recorded, and twelve thousand four hundred and forty-three violent offences were recorded against lawful authorities. The report also emphasised that offences against persons were as follows: murder, manslaughter, infanticide, concealment of birth, rape, and other forms of physical abuse.

Amongst the 36 states in Nigeria, Benue State has suffered some of the most gruesome attacks and violence. Mathew & Chijioke (2023) reveal that violent activities between herdsmen and farmers have displaced more than 100,000 people in Benue and Enugu States and left them under the care of relatives or in makeshift Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) camps. ACLED data states that Benue experienced about 722 violent attacks and 3,251 deaths between 2015 and 2024 (Oluwole, 2025).

**Trend analysis of violent killings in Benue State, Nigeria:  
2015-2024**



Source: [ACLED](#)

Benue State has faced numerous security challenges. The most recent source of insecurity involves conflicts between Benue farmers and herders (Fiase & Gbaden, 2024; Aluya & Iangba, 2025). In Benue State, the conflict between herders and farmers is a phenomenon that has had a profound impact on citizens, both physically and psychologically. Over the years, reports of violent killings between herders and farmers have continued to rise. Gambo et al. (2024) cited Sahara Reporters' record from 2016, stating that over 500 people were killed in Agatu, Benue State, now widely known as the Agatu Massacres, with over 7000 displaced. The incident occurred between late February and March 2016. The global terrorism index in 2015 classified the group as the fourth deadliest terror organisation, behind Boko Haram, Al-Shabaab, and ISIS.

On Friday, the 13<sup>th</sup> of June 2025, the county was taken aback as both the social and print media shared the sad news of the gruesome massacre of Nigerian citizens in Yelewata, Benue state. Hence, this study aims to examine how X users use their tweets to mobilize, construct, negotiate, resist, and critique governmental lapses, insecurity, and violence in Nigeria, employing critical

stylistics to reveal the stylistic and linguistic choices that shape meaning in X discourse. The objectives of the study include examining: (i) the linguistic strategies used in tweets to narrate and frame the Benue massacre, (ii) how victims, perpetrators, and governmental actions are represented through critical stylistic tools. The objectives will be guided by the following corresponding questions: (i) What linguistic strategies are used in tweets to narrate and frame the Benue massacre? (ii) How are victims, perpetrators, and governmental actions represented in tweets? By analyzing selected tweets, the study seeks to explore how language functions as a tool for mobilizing, negotiating, and resisting violence and insecurity in Nigeria. This study is significant as it provides an in-depth understanding of how language is used to frame and circulate narratives of violence in social media discourse. The study also contributes to the growing body of Critical Stylistics by applying its framework to understudy crucial domains of social media and national insecurity. The practical nature of this study also makes it significantly important to policymakers, security agencies, and media personnel, as it reveals public perceptions of violence and insecurity, potentially informing them on more sensitive and effective communicative strategies.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Humans are at the apex of civilization among other forms of life because of a highly structured and consistent form and use of language. Anurang (2023) states that language is a constituent of civilization, it raised man from a savage state to the plane which he was capable of reaching, and Anavami et al. (2025) agree, stating that Language transcends its function as a mere tool for communication, emerging as a potent force that shapes social relations and constructs individual and collective identities. This paper investigates how different citizens on X use language to inform, express, and construct social criticism in the Benue massacre. Utilizing Lesley Jeffries'

Critical Stylistics (2010) as explicated by Irshad, & Mehmood, (2025), which examines the relationship between ideology and power performance through a linguistic lens. Lesley Jeffries' model of Critical Stylistics comprises 10 tools, of which three will be utilised for data analysis. (i) Naming and Describing, (ii) Representing Actions/Events, and (iii) Equating and Contrasting. At the Naming and Describing analytic level, the framework examines how events, concepts, and even people or places are labelled using nouns, noun groups, or nominalized verbs (Aluya & Ochulor, 2024). At the analytic level of Representing Actions or Events, the framework focuses on verbs and the concept of transitivity. It establishes who is doing what, to whom, and what has been done, as well as how actions are performed or disrupted. Equating and Contracting investigates the way similarities and differences are constructed through the use of language (construction, expression, and choices of words). In the Context of the Benue massacre, Critical Stylistics provides a lens through which we view and analyze how linguistic choices are used to resist, condemn, and call out the government for failing its citizens.

## **Methodology**


This study adopts a qualitative methodology to examine the Yelewata Benue massacre. Data for this study were collected using the X-advance search feature, utilizing specific hashtags associated with Benue killings, such as #benuekillings, #Yelewata, and #benuemassacre. A purposive sampling method was employed to select 5 tweets from X. Tweets in English and Pidgin were selected, and Tweets in English served as the primary language of the discourse. The tweets were selected from 14<sup>th</sup> June, 2025 to 04<sup>th</sup> July, 2025. The analysis of this study employs Jefferies' Critical Stylistics to gain insight from the data collected.

## **Data Analysis**

**Tweet 1:** Benue is bleeding 📌 Over 200 Nigerians brutally killed and rendered homeless.



Enough is Enough!!! (MBAH, 2025).

In the opening lines of this tweet, the tweet performs several forms of rhetoric. The use of “*Benue is bleeding...*” is a metaphorical personification which frames a place “Benue” as wounded and bleeding. Benue, in this tweet, stands not just as the identifier of a location, but also for its people. The strategic use of the variant of the verb (to be) “is” and the continuous form of the verb (bleed) “bleeding”, emotionally frames the place into a suffering body, establishing empathy and urgency. The tweet labels victims as “*Over 200 Nigerians...*” instead of Benue residents, a choice that positions the urgency of the incident as a national challenge and not one to be described as local. The use of the adverb “brutally” qualifies the degree of insecurity in the nation, while characterizing the perpetrators as inhuman and barbaric. The tweet outlines and foregrounds the long-term effects and consequences to be faced by Benue indigenes through the use of “*rendered homeless.*” The verb “rendered” highlights the level of suffering not just the current attack has on the people, but also its aftermath. Further emphasizing the effect of the attack, the tweet deploys the use of the blood emoji “”, which functions as an intensifier to punctuate the level of pain and suffering. The blood emoji is also used to frame and describe the vision representation of the “bleeding Benue”. In the tweet, it is observed that there is an agent suppression of the actor; the actions and effects of actions are accounted for, but the actors are stepped aside, which leads to a centered focus on the victim and the effect of the violence and insecurity. The exclamatory clause “*Enough is Enough!!!*” expresses outrage and a call to corrective action. The capitalization of “E” in the second “Enough” goes against the convention of the English syntactic structure, but the tweet consciously deviates from the norms to buttress its call for action. The triple exclamatory marks serve as an increase in force for the call against insecurity and violent killings. Combining “Benue” and “bleeding” automatically equates a place with a wounded human body. This

metaphorically personified statement makes the idea of communal suffering and pain immediately relatable and felt. By referring to the victims of the attack as Nigerians, the tweet equates a local tragedy to a scale of national insurgency and insecurity. This tweet performs identity construction, moral positioning, and mobilizes a call for action.

**Tweet 2:** Stop Benue K!llings, 200 Nigerians have been killed in Benue and the government has turned a deaf ear, Benue bleeds 🇳🇮🇪🇳🇮🇪🇳🇮🇪🇳🇮🇪🇳🇮🇪🇳🇮🇪 (Amaka, 2025)

This tweet starts with an imperative demand, “*Stop Benue K!llings*” which is addressed to an unspecified audience. The insertion of “!” in place of the alphabet “i” intensifies shock and trauma, and is also an attempt to censor the brutal and gruesome killings in Benue while semantically retaining its transparency. The capitalization of each word in the sentence is against the convention of the English language grammatical rule, but the tweet employs it to call attention to itself, creating a sense of urgency. With the use of “*200 Nigerians have been killed in Benue...*”, the tweet labels both people and location. By combining both Nigerian and Benue in the same statement, the tweet doubles their identity, strategically framing the incident as both a crisis for local sympathy and national identification. The use of 200 in its exactness adds an evidential notion to the discourse, contrasting with Tweet 1, which states “*Over 200*”. Paying attention to the two “*K!llings*” and “*killed*” as used in the tweet, the first is written in initial caps when it shouldn’t be, and the “i” in it is replaced with the exclamation mark. This is done to establish emphasis and call to action against the Benue massacre. While the second is used in establishing the sad reality of the fate of Nigerians in Benue, hence the reason it’s written conventionally without any form of emphasis. “*...the government has turned a deaf ear...*” is an idiomatic expression that labels the nonchalant and neglectful attitude of the state concerning matters of its citizens. The lexical choices in the tweet express intentional ignorance and failure of the government to carry out its

fundamental functions, thereby describing the level of insecurity suffered in the nation. The use of six crying emojis cannot be overlooked, as it intensifies the grief, sadness, and public mourning. The repetition of the emoji signifies a deep and collective wailing, amplifying the tweet's call to action to stop the killings. Like Tweet 1, which strategically steps aside the actor in the crisis, this tweet also keeps the perpetrators grammatically absent, but it goes on to name the government, thereby strategically keeping the center of focus on the victims of the incident and the failure of the government in protecting its citizens. The strategic use of present perfect tenses creates a deep representation of events, amplifying their meaning. The use of “...have been killed” places the event in the recent past with relevance to the present. “has turned a deaf ear” establishes a continuation of the condition, implying that the actions of the government do not look like they intend to do anything soon, “...Benue Bleeds” presents the pain and suffering of the people as current and ongoing. The tweet equates local crises to national insurgency through the use of “200 Nigerians have been killed in Benue...” thereby establishing that insecurity is a national crisis and not a locally streamlined issue. The tweet frames victims as both locally affected and nationally relevant. The tweet informs, indicts, and demands a remedy.

**Tweet 3:** Benue is soaked in blood, and the 'President' is quiet. The Governor? Missing in action. 200 Nigerians massacred, not by natural disaster, but by terrorists. And the so-called leaders can't even pretend to care. This is criminal. (Jake, 2025)

This tweet exhibits various linguistic features, including vivid imagery, labelling, irony, sarcasm, and moral condemnation. It also uses metaphorical language. The phrase “Benue is soaked in blood” creates humanised imagery, linking the land to the human body. The word “soaked” highlights the severity of the attack, conveying a sense of overwhelming suffering and trauma, as if the area is drowned in violence. Similar to Tweet 2, this tweet provides a specific number and employs the verb “massacred,” a very strong term that not only describes violent killing but also

implies deliberate intent. It labels victims as Nigerians, framing the insurgency as a national crisis. The clause "...not by natural disaster, but by terrorists" assigns an actor- "terrorist"- framing the event as intentional and politically driven, rather than accidental or natural misfortune. Labelling them "terrorists" evokes an ideological outlook of political insecurity, framing the violence within a discourse of terrorism and counter- terrorism. The quotation marks around "President" are used strategically, representing how Nigerians often sarcastically quote the phrase when mocking or degrading the office. In this tweet, the president is put in quotes to sarcastically delegitimise the authority and significance of the title, suggesting it is undeserved. The phrase "The Governor? Missing in action" combines a rhetorical question- highlighting the governor' s apparent inaction in his state- and the idiomatic " missing in action, " which depicts the governor as absent. The term "so called leaders" reinforces the quotation of the president and the governor' s absence, further undermining the government and implying performative leadership or active government. Like Tweets 1 and 2, this tweet equates place with body, portraying Benue as a body soaked in blood. The stark contrast between natural disaster and terrorism indicates that the violence is intentional and political. It underscores that the magnitude of the attack should have been a natural disaster, not a human act. The tweet also highlights a clear ideological divide: while the public endures suffering and agony, the leaders remain absent and silent. The phrase "can' t even pretend to care" intensifies this contrast by emphasising the leaders' failure- even in their minimal duty- to show concern for the people.

**Tweet 4:** And also no forget say this is not the first time something like this dey happen for Benue. The Agatu Massacre (Feb-Mar 2016, Benue State) it was Reported that 300-500 were killed by the same herdsmen. Them Dey slowly Dey wipe out Benue people. Right in front of our eyes. (Micheal, 2025)

This tweet recounts a previous Massacre in the same state (Agatu LGA), expressing iteration and framing accusations through narrative. The tweet corroborates its claim through the use of

quantification and explicitly naming the perpetrator. The use of "no forget say" directly aims to jog the public memory, presupposing shared knowledge, framing the public as one social entity and not the various ethnic groups and states that the nation possesses. The use of the Nigerian pidgin strategically describes and identifies the geographical location of the incidence, and also expresses the speaker's intention to communicate a wider audience thereby emphasizing the statement "no forget say". In the statement "The Agutu Massacre" the tweet capitalizes the "M" in Massacre, a strong evaluative labelling that frames the 2016 attack in the same Benue state as intentional killings. The expression of "Feb-Mar 2016, Benue State" provides identification of place and time, elevating credibility of the tweet, while condemning historical repetition and a possible continuation. The use of reported speech in "it was Reported that 300-500 were killed" with a combination of capitalization of "R" in reported frames the claims to be legitimate while strategically separating itself from owning the message. The mention of 300-500 acknowledges uncertainty, but succeeds in emphasizing the scale and degree of the damage. The tweet identifies and labels herdsmen as perpetrators of the violent act, and the use expression "the same herdsmen" labels them again as the perpetrators of the previous attack and the current attack, framing a patterned narrative, thereby creating a stance that when a future attack may come, then these "herdsmen" should be held accountable. "Dey slowly Dey wipe out Benue People" is an expression that the tweet uses to make its stance in the discourse. After reminding the audience of the pattern of the attack, identifying and labelling the perpetrators, the tweet now moves on to state that the people of Benue are slowly getting wiped out. The statement intensifies existential threat. The choice of "wipe out" frames extermination and use of "slowly" expresses that the intention of extermination is conscious and strategic. "Right in front of our eyes" is an idiomatic expression used in the tweet to frame the public as a part of the people being violated, constructing

psychological proximity, and indulging moral urgency in the minds of the public. The Agutu Massacre is clearly equated to the Yelewata massacre as the tweet identifies the perpetrators of both attacks, “Herdsmen”, thereby converting isolated incidents into a patterned attack. The tweet also equates the targeted LGA Yelewate with the entire state by labeling “Benue people,” thereby establishing the incident not as a problem of one local government, but an entire state, hence framing collective victimhood. This tweet reframes the Yelewata massacre in Benue state as a patterned and intentional attack. Through the use of pidgin, historical citation, and naming the perpetrators, the tweet nationalizes the insurgency, reminds and call the public to action, and pressures the government to perform its duties.

**Tweet 5:** Has anybody been arrested in connection with Benue massacre or have we moved on?  
This tweet, published on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July 2025, twenty-two days after the Yelewata massacre, reiterates a post by Kelvin Ugwu: “Today marks 20 days since over 200 persons were killed in Benue State, Nigeria. Has anyone been arrested in connection with the killings? Or have we moved on?” The tweet performs two rhetorical functions. First, it uses interrogative language to demand factual accountability, and it presents a sarcastic rhetorical assertion, “...or have we moved on?”, establishing that the situation begins to seem forgotten. The mention of “*Benue massacre*” names and identifies the event. Labelling the attack as a massacre frames it as intentional and brutal, rather than just a vague episode of conflict. The statement “*Has anybody been arrested...*” strategically uses the indefinite anybody to establish that an arrest has not been made, not because of a lack of perpetrators, but a sheer sense of irresponsibility and politicizing nature of the nation's government. The use of “*have we moved on?*” creates a sense of inclusivity as the pronoun “we” is deployed. “We” combines both the public, the media, and the government, putting everyone into a box of failing to demand accountability. Victims are identified only as part of a named event and

foregrounded or framed emotionally, thereby shifting focus to accountability. The mention of the perpetrators is implied through the mention of “anybody”. The government is also indirectly named as the duty bearers who are expected to have apprehended the perpetrators. The latter part of the tweet presents an intransitive evaluation; its illocutionary force is very rhetorical, as it strategically accuses through the use of suggestion, performing a criticizing act which accuses both the public and the government of forgetting. The tweet equates arrest with justice. Conceptually, the arrest is presented as a tool for society to respond to insecurity, violence, and crimes. The use of arrest and moving on are two contrasting elements that the tweet portrays to express its message. The contrast in both establishes that arrest is a form of answer and redemption for the government, while moving on is a clear statement of impunity and a failed government. The combination of the inclusive pronoun “we” is in contrast with the strategically labeled perpetrators “anybody”, establishing a call to “we” not to forget and move on from the action of “anybody”. Through interrogative structure and rhetorical alternatives, the tweet requests justice, condemning the absence of action by both the public and the government.

### **Discussion of Findings and Conclusion**

Utilizing Jeffrie’s Critical Stylistics, the analysis reveals how citizens employ stylistic and linguistic strategies to construct narratives of violence, grief, and political failure. Analyzing the data, three critical trends were observed: foregrounding of victims, indirect and direct representation of perpetrators, and negative evaluation of governmental actors. Victims are consistently highlighted through quantification, use of emotional language, and metaphorical expressions to emphasize and explicate the harm caused. The repetition of blood and death is consistent in all tweets, framing the Benue state as not only a state of violence, but also a symbolic space of national tragedy. the tweets also humanize the victims while simultaneously mobilizing

public empathy and outrage. Perpetrators are represented with varying levels of explicitness. In some tweets, they are named directly, in others, their actions are foregrounded without any specific naming. The use of the word “massacre” to describe the actions of the perpetrators labels them as organized and intentional, framing their actions as systemic and not incidental. The government is mostly negatively represented in all tweets. The tweets consistently construct the government as negligent and incompetent, establishing failed leadership. The study underscores the critical role of digital media (X) in shaping violent narratives in Nigeria. X emerges as a platform where citizens strategically mobilize public consciousness, resist insecurity, insurgency, and bad governance. X stands as a site for communal outrage, mourning, and a platform for political critique, utilizing language and stylistic strategies to shape the fractured reality of Nigeria.

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## Stress Management in Contemporary Society

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### Abstract:

Stress constitutes a fundamental psychological and physiological response to the increasing demands of modern life. While it serves an adaptive purpose in preparing individuals to confront perceived threats through the “fight-or-flight” response, chronic activation of this system has detrimental effects on both physical and mental health. In contemporary, materialistic societies, where pressures from work, relationships, and social expectations are constant, stress has become a pervasive concern. This paper explores the impact of stress on human well-being and presents six evidence-based strategies for effective stress management.

**Keywords:** stress management, strategies, physical and mental health, materialistic societies, social expectations

### Introduction:

Stress constitutes a fundamental psychological and physiological response to the increasing demands of modern life. Empirical surveys indicate that a considerable proportion of individuals in the United States encounter stress-related challenges at various points throughout the year. The origins of this response can be traced to the brain’s innate protective mechanisms.

Specifically, the human brain is equipped with a neural alarm system that activates upon the perception of threat. This activation stimulates the release of stress-related hormones, thereby mobilizing the body’s resources for immediate action. This process, commonly referred to as the *fight-or-flight response*, serves as an adaptive function that enhances the individual’s capacity to

either confront or evade potential danger. Ordinarily, once a perceived threat has diminished, the human body is programmed to revert to a state of homeostasis characterized by relaxation and stability. In the context of contemporary society, however, persistent environmental and psychological demands frequently inhibit this return to equilibrium, thereby maintaining the stress response in a state of chronic activation. This phenomenon highlights the necessity of systematic stress management, which involves the application of evidence-based strategies aimed at recalibrating the body's neuroendocrine and physiological systems. In the absence of such interventions, individuals may remain in a prolonged state of hyperarousal, which, over time, has been empirically linked to a range of deleterious health outcomes, including cardiovascular pathology, immunosuppression, metabolic dysfunction, and affective disorders.

Thus, the proactive adoption of stress management practices is essential not only for safeguarding physical and psychological health but also for preserving interpersonal relationships and overall quality of life. The following discussion presents practical strategies to mitigate stress and cultivate a more balanced, peaceful, and fulfilling life.

### **Stress Management Strategy 1: Avoidance of Unnecessary Stressors**

Although it is neither possible nor advisable to eliminate all sources of stress, many stress-inducing factors can, in fact, be minimized or avoided. Research suggests that proactive identification and reduction of avoidable stressors contributes significantly to overall psychological well-being and resilience (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Several strategies may be employed in this regard:

- **Establishing personal boundaries.** Developing the capacity to decline excessive responsibilities is essential for maintaining psychological balance. Overcommitment in either personal or professional domains frequently leads to heightened stress and diminished productivity.
- **Limiting exposure to negative interpersonal influences.** When individuals consistently generate emotional distress, and attempts at constructive resolution prove ineffective, it may be beneficial to reduce contact or disengage from such relationships entirely.
- **Modifying environmental triggers.** Many stressors originate from one's immediate surroundings. For example, limiting exposure to distressing media, selecting alternative

commuting routes to avoid traffic congestion, or utilizing online platforms for routine tasks such as grocery shopping can substantially reduce environmental stress.

- **Avoiding contentious topics.** Discussions concerning polarizing issues, such as politics or religion, often exacerbate interpersonal conflict and psychological strain. Strategically disengaging from such conversations can help maintain emotional stability.
- **Prioritizing responsibilities.** Careful evaluation of daily obligations allows for differentiation between tasks of genuine necessity and those that are optional. By delegating, postponing, or eliminating nonessential activities, individuals can reduce cognitive and emotional overload.

Through the intentional avoidance of unnecessary stressors, individuals create the psychological capacity to more effectively confront the unavoidable challenges of daily life.

### **Stress Management Strategy 2: Altering the Situation**

In circumstances where stressors cannot be fully avoided, it becomes essential to implement strategies aimed at modifying the situation to reduce its impact. This process often requires adjustments in communication patterns, interpersonal interactions, and daily practices. By actively reshaping one's approach to recurring challenges, individuals can minimize the likelihood of repeated exposure to the same stress-inducing conditions. Several key methods include:

- **Open expression of emotions.** Suppressing emotional responses often leads to the accumulation of resentment and exacerbates stress. Articulating concerns in a respectful and constructive manner facilitates resolution and prevents the perpetuation of problematic situations.
- **Engaging in compromise.** Effective conflict management frequently requires reciprocity. By demonstrating flexibility and a willingness to adjust one's own expectations or behaviors, individuals increase the likelihood of achieving mutually satisfactory outcomes.
- **Adopting assertive behaviors.** Assertiveness enables individuals to take an active role in managing their own needs and responsibilities. Rather than withdrawing or adopting a passive stance, addressing issues directly—while maintaining respect for others—can prevent the escalation of stressors.

- **Improving time management.** Inadequate time management is a significant contributor to stress, often resulting in feelings of being overwhelmed or chronically behind schedule. Through careful planning, prioritization of tasks, and realistic workload distribution, individuals can mitigate avoidable stress and enhance overall productivity.

By altering stressful circumstances through deliberate communication and behavioural strategies, individuals can reduce the intensity of stress responses while fostering healthier and more sustainable patterns of interaction and time use.

### **Stress Management Strategy 3: Adapting to the Stressor**

When external stressors cannot be altered or avoided, the focus must shift inward, emphasizing the modification of one's perceptions, expectations, and attitudes. Adaptation involves cultivating psychological flexibility and resilience, thereby enabling individuals to maintain a sense of control even under adverse conditions. Several techniques have been identified as effective in this regard:

- **Cognitive reframing of stressors.** Reinterpreting stressful situations from a constructive perspective can significantly reduce their emotional impact. For example, reframing a traffic delay as an opportunity for reflection or leisure helps transform frustration into acceptance.
- **Adopting a broader perspective.** Placing stress-inducing events within a long-term context allows individuals to evaluate their true significance. By asking whether the situation will matter in the future—weeks, months, or years from now—individuals can conserve energy for challenges that genuinely warrant attention.
- **Adjusting personal standards.** Unrealistic expectations and perfectionistic tendencies are major sources of avoidable stress. Establishing attainable standards, and accepting outcomes that are “good enough,” fosters both psychological relief and improved well-being.
- **Cultivating positive focus.** Actively acknowledging personal strengths, achievements, and sources of gratitude can counterbalance stress-induced negativity. This process enhances resilience by reinforcing optimism and emotional stability.

## Adjusting One's Attitude

Cognitive appraisals play a central role in shaping both emotional and physiological responses to stress. Self-defeating thought patterns—often marked by rigid language such as “always,” “never,” “should,” or “must”—tend to magnify distress and limit adaptive coping. Replacing such absolutist thinking with more flexible, compassionate self-dialogue promotes healthier cognitive processing and greater emotional equilibrium.

In sum, adaptation to stressors requires a deliberate shift in mindset, enabling individuals to transform their subjective experience of stress and foster long-term resilience.

## Stress Management Strategy 4: Acceptance of Unchangeable Stressors

Certain stressors are inherently unavoidable and beyond the scope of individual control. Examples include bereavement, the onset of chronic illness, or large-scale societal and economic disruptions. In such contexts, resistance or denial often amplifies distress, whereas acceptance facilitates psychological adjustment and long-term well-being. Although acceptance may initially be challenging, it represents a constructive coping strategy that reduces emotional exhaustion and fosters resilience. Key components of this approach include:

- **Recognizing the limits of control.** Attempting to regulate uncontrollable factors—such as the behaviors of others or unforeseen life events—can perpetuate frustration and helplessness. Instead, adaptive coping emphasizes directing attention toward controllable variables, such as one's own attitudes, reactions, and coping responses.
- **Identifying potential benefits.** Adopting a growth-oriented perspective enables individuals to view adversity as an opportunity for personal development and learning. Reflecting on past experiences and extracting meaningful lessons contributes to resilience and fosters a sense of purpose in the face of hardship.
- **Expressing emotions constructively.** Verbalizing feelings to trusted individuals or mental health professionals can provide cathartic relief, enhance social support, and reduce the burden of emotional isolation. Sharing experiences should not be misconstrued as weakness, but rather as an adaptive strategy that strengthens coping capacity.

- **Practicing forgiveness.** Letting go of anger, resentment, and unrealistic expectations of others reduces the accumulation of negative emotional energy. Forgiveness, both of self and others, enables individuals to release psychological burdens, thereby promoting emotional stability and improved interpersonal relationships.

Ultimately, the acceptance of unchangeable stressors reflects a process of psychological adaptation that prioritizes inner peace and resilience over futile attempts at external control.

### **Stress Management Strategy 5: Incorporating Recreation and Relaxation**

In addition to adopting proactive coping mechanisms and cultivating adaptive mindsets, effective stress management also necessitates intentional self-nurturing practices. Allocating time for recreation and relaxation is not merely a luxury but a psychological necessity. Regular engagement in restorative activities enhances resilience, promotes emotional balance, and strengthens one's capacity to cope with life's ongoing stressors.

**Healthy methods of relaxation and restoration** may include physical activity (e.g., walking, exercising, or gardening), creative or reflective outlets (such as journaling or reading), social connection (e.g., conversing with friends or spending time with loved ones), and leisure activities that elicit positive affect (such as listening to music, watching comedy, or interacting with pets). By integrating such activities into daily routines, individuals foster a sustainable buffer against the physiological and emotional toll of stress.

Key approaches include:

- **Scheduling relaxation.** Establishing designated periods for rest and recuperation ensures that relaxation becomes a consistent, non-negotiable aspect of one's daily life. Protecting this time from competing obligations is essential for long-term stress reduction.
- **Fostering social connection.** Maintaining supportive interpersonal relationships serves as a significant protective factor against stress. Positive social networks provide emotional validation, practical assistance, and a sense of belonging.



- **Engaging in enjoyable activities.** Pursuing hobbies and leisure activities that elicit joy—whether through creative expression, intellectual engagement, or physical recreation—enhances overall well-being and replenishes psychological resources.
- **Utilizing humor as a coping mechanism.** Humor facilitates both emotional release and physiological relaxation. The capacity to laugh at oneself and one's circumstances has been empirically linked to improved stress resilience and emotional regulation.

By prioritizing relaxation and enjoyment, individuals create a balanced lifestyle that not only mitigates the negative consequences of stress but also promotes psychological flourishing and overall quality of life.

### **Stress Management Strategy 6: Adopting a Healthy Lifestyle**

Physical well-being forms a crucial foundation for effective stress management. A healthy lifestyle not only strengthens resistance to stress but also enhances recovery from its effects. By maintaining balanced routines in exercise, nutrition, sleep, and substance use, individuals can build resilience against both acute and chronic stressors.

- **Engaging in regular exercise.** Consistent physical activity—particularly aerobic exercise—has been shown to reduce stress hormones, release endorphins, and improve mood regulation. A minimum of 30 minutes of moderate exercise at least three times per week is widely recommended for optimal benefits.
- **Maintaining a nutritious diet.** Proper nutrition fuels both cognitive and physical performance. Balanced meals, beginning with a healthy breakfast, help sustain energy levels, improve concentration, and stabilize mood.
- **Limiting stimulants and processed sugars.** Excessive consumption of caffeine and sugar provides only temporary boosts in energy, followed by rapid declines in mood and alertness. Reducing reliance on such stimulants promotes steadier energy levels and improved sleep quality.
- **Avoiding harmful substances.** Reliance on alcohol, tobacco, or drugs as coping mechanisms may provide temporary relief but often exacerbates long-term stress and

impairs health. Constructive stress management requires addressing challenges with clarity and resilience rather than avoidance through substance use.

- **Prioritizing adequate sleep.** Sleep is essential for both physiological recovery and cognitive processing. Chronic sleep deprivation impairs decision-making, increases irritability, and amplifies vulnerability to stress. Ensuring sufficient rest is, therefore, a non-negotiable component of effective stress management.

## Organizational Considerations in Stress Management

Beyond individual practices, the organizational environment plays a pivotal role in either mitigating or amplifying stress. Sustainable stress reduction in the workplace requires leaders and managers to cultivate participatory, transparent, and empathetic organizational cultures.

- **Facilitating, not imposing, change.** Efforts to manage stress in organizational contexts should avoid top-down mandates framed as “changing mindsets” or “correcting attitudes.” Such language implies deficiency in employees and often engenders resistance. Instead, managers should interpret, communicate, and enable change in ways that respect employee perspectives and contributions.
- **Promoting involvement and participation.** When organizational changes—such as restructuring, policy shifts, or relocations—are introduced, employees must be engaged early in the process. Participation through workshops, collaborative decision-making, and open dialogue fosters ownership and reduces uncertainty-driven stress.
- **Building trust through leadership.** Leaders who demonstrate empathy, transparency, and consistency establish a foundation of trust. Trust, in turn, acts as a buffer against organizational stressors by fostering psychological safety and resilience among employees.
- **Prioritizing training and facilitation.** Rather than imposing rigid directives, organizations should invest in equipping employees with the skills, resources, and autonomy to adapt effectively to change. Leadership behavior—marked by compassion, integrity, and collaboration—is often more influential in reducing stress than policy reforms alone.

## Conclusion

Stress is a complex interplay between environmental demands and individual coping capacities. The six strategies outlined—ranging from avoidance and situational change to adaptation, acceptance, relaxation, and lifestyle—provide a robust, theory-based framework for managing stress effectively. Empirical evidence from contemporary research further underscores the importance of physical health and mindfulness in enhancing resilience. By integrating these practices into everyday life, individuals can protect health, nurture relationships, and foster long-term well-being.

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## Challenges Faced by English Teachers in Implementing Digital Learning Tools

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### Abstract:

The integration of digital learning tools in English language teaching has become increasingly essential for modern education. However, English teachers face numerous challenges in effectively implementing these technologies in their classrooms. This study explores the multifaceted barriers that hinder successful digital tool adoption among English teachers. Common challenges include a lack of adequate training and digital literacy, limited access to necessary technological resources, and insufficient institutional support. Teachers often struggle with technical issues, time constraints for adapting to new methodologies, and maintaining student engagement in digital environments. Furthermore, external factors such as unreliable internet connectivity, noisy or disruptive learning settings, and resistance from students or parents exacerbate these difficulties. The gap between pedagogical knowledge and digital competence limits teachers' ability to design meaningful language learning activities using digital tools. Addressing these challenges requires comprehensive professional development, increased access to reliable technology, and supportive policies from educational institutions. Collaborative efforts among educators, administrators, and policymakers are vital to create enabling environments conducive to technology integration. Overcoming these hurdles can enhance teaching effectiveness, foster student engagement, and improve language learning outcomes, ensuring that digital tools fulfill their transformative potential in English education.

**Keywords:** Digital literacy, Digital learning tools, English language teaching, Teacher challenges, Technology integration

### Introduction:

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The growing prevalence of digital technologies has revolutionized English language teaching, offering innovative opportunities to enhance learning. Despite the promising benefits of digital tools, their integration poses significant challenges for English teachers. Many educators face difficulties such as limited training, inadequate technical support, and resource constraints. Moreover, teachers must navigate the complexities of adapting pedagogy to align with technology while addressing diverse student needs. These challenges can impede the effective use of digital tools, impacting both teaching practices and student engagement. A deeper understanding of these barriers is crucial for developing strategies that support teachers in harnessing digital technologies efficiently. This paper examines the key challenges encountered by English teachers when implementing digital learning tools and highlights the necessity of systemic support to optimize technology use in language education. [1] [7]

## Objectives of the Study

The study seeks to understand the multidimensional challenges that English teachers encounter while integrating digital learning tools in classroom contexts. Digitalization in education is often promoted as a universal solution for enhancing engagement and communication, yet the ground realities of implementation are more complex. This research attempts to bridge the gap between policy-level expectations and classroom-level practices. The specific objectives are:

- To identify infrastructural barriers such as lack of digital devices, poor internet connectivity, unreliable electricity supply, and limited access to licensed digital platforms, which impede the smooth integration of digital learning in ELT?
- To analyze pedagogical challenges faced by teachers in balancing traditional instructional methods with new digital approaches while ensuring that language learning outcomes are not compromised.
- To explore socio-cultural issues including the digital divide between urban and rural students, socio-economic disparities, parental perceptions, and institutional attitudes toward technology adoption.
- To assess student engagement challenges such as lack of motivation, distractions in online environments, and difficulties in adapting to self-paced digital learning.
- To propose strategies and recommendations that can guide policymakers, institutions, and teacher training bodies in addressing these challenges and fostering effective technology-supported English language education. [5]

## Research Methodology

This study employs a mixed-methods approach that combines both quantitative and qualitative research techniques to provide a comprehensive picture of the challenges faced by English teachers.

**Research Design:** The research follows an ‘exploratory and descriptive design’. It first explores the nature of digital integration challenges and then describes patterns and trends through statistical and thematic analysis.

**Sample:** The population of this study includes English teachers at college level. Teachers from

both urban and rural contexts are selected to capture diverse perspectives. A purposive sampling method is employed to ensure participants have direct experience with digital learning tools. Around 20 participants selected for in-depth interviews and classroom observations.

### **Data Collection Tools**

*Survey Questionnaires* – A structured questionnaire is designed with both closed-ended and Likert-scale questions to gather data on access to technology, digital skills, and perceptions of challenges.

*Interviews and Focus Group Discussions* – Semi-structured interviews with teachers are conducted to gain deeper insights into their lived experiences, resistance, and coping mechanisms. Focus group discussions provide a collective understanding of institutional and cultural challenges.

*Classroom Observations* – Selected teachers' classrooms are observed to examine the practical application of digital tools, student interaction patterns, and limitations in real-time teaching contexts.

### **Data Analysis**

*Quantitative Data Analysis:* Survey responses are analyzed using descriptive statistics such as percentages, mean scores, and standard deviations. Correlation analysis is applied to identify the relationship between teacher preparedness and effective digital tool use.

*Qualitative Data Analysis:* Thematic analysis is employed to code and interpret interview transcripts and classroom observation notes. Themes such as 'infrastructural barriers, lack of training, student distraction, and institutional support' are identified.

### **Ethical Considerations**

The study adheres to research ethics by ensuring:

- Informed consent from all participants.
- Confidentiality of responses and anonymity in reporting.
- Voluntary participation with the right to withdraw at any stage.
- Neutrality and respect in representing teachers' voices without bias.

**Reliability and Validity:** To ensure reliability, the survey instrument is pilot-tested with a small group of teachers before large-scale distribution. Triangulation of data from surveys, interviews, and classroom observations strengthens the validity of findings.

**Analysis and Discussion:** The data collected from surveys, interviews, and classroom observations revealed several recurring challenges that English teachers encounter while integrating digital learning tools into their teaching practices. The analysis is categorized into four major themes: infrastructural barriers, teacher preparedness, pedagogical concerns, and socio-cultural factors.

### **Infrastructural Barriers**

Survey data showed that nearly 58% of teachers reported unstable internet connectivity and inadequate access to devices as the most pressing challenge. Teachers in rural areas highlighted frequent power outages and limited institutional funding for digital infrastructure. Classroom observations confirmed that interruptions due to poor connectivity often disrupted the flow of English lessons, reducing student concentration and engagement. [3] [4] [6]

### **Teacher Readiness and Digital Literacy**

Approximately 65% of teachers admitted to lacking confidence in using advanced digital tools beyond basic PowerPoint presentations and video-sharing platforms. Many teachers expressed dependence on self-learning through trial-and-error rather than formal training. Interviews revealed that the absence of continuous professional development programs in digital pedagogy contributes to teacher resistance and anxiety toward adopting new technologies.

### **Pedagogical Concerns**

A recurring theme across interviews was the difficulty in balancing traditional teaching methods with digital approaches. Teachers observed that while technology enhanced multimedia learning, it often shifted focus away from core language skills such as writing and critical reading. Some teachers felt pressured to overuse technology to meet administrative expectations, resulting in superficial integration rather than meaningful learning.

### **Socio-Cultural Issues**

The digital divide emerged strongly in the findings, with students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds unable to afford personal devices or stable internet. Teachers also noted challenges in maintaining student motivation in self-paced digital environments. Classroom observations indicated frequent distractions when students used mobile phones for learning, leading to reduced focus on lesson objectives. Additionally, cultural skepticism among parents and school management regarding the effectiveness of digital education created an unsupportive environment for teachers. [2]

### **Challenges in equity and inclusivity**

One of the major barriers English teachers face when implementing digital learning tools is ensuring equity and inclusivity for all learners. Students requires special educational needs (SEN) for differently abled learners they often find mainstream digital platforms insufficiently supportive. Many tools are not designed with Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles, meaning they lack features like text-to-speech, captioning, voice recognition, or customizable fonts and backgrounds. This creates an access gap, where students with disabilities may feel excluded from the learning process. For example, a visually impaired student may struggle to engage with digital reading platforms that do not integrate screen-reader compatibility, while a dyslexic learner may find standard digital texts overwhelming without adaptive font options. Teachers are left with the additional burden of finding alternative tools or manual accommodations, often without adequate institutional support or training. Furthermore, socio-economic disparities widen this gap, as assistive technologies



## Findings

Study highlights the following key findings:

- Infrastructure remains the greatest challenge, with rural schools disproportionately affected by limited internet connectivity, power outages, and lack of devices.
- Teacher digital literacy is insufficient, as many educators lack training in advanced tools and rely on basic technological applications.
- Pedagogical challenges persist, as teachers struggle to integrate technology into lesson plans without compromising fundamental language skills.
- The digital divide among students continues to widen, leaving economically weaker learners at a disadvantage.
- Institutional and cultural resistance from school management and parents undermines teachers' efforts to implement digital learning tools effectively.
- Student engagement is inconsistent, as self-paced digital learning environments often encourage distraction rather than deep learning.

## Implications

The findings of this study carry significant implications for English Language Teaching in the digital era. While digital tools present unprecedented opportunities for enhancing communication skills, fostering creativity, and enabling blended learning, the challenges outlined necessitate strategic interventions:

Professional Development and Training: Regular workshops and training sessions should be provided to enhance teachers' digital literacy and confidence in using advanced tools like learning management systems, collaborative platforms, and AI-powered applications.

Blended Learning Models: Institutions should encourage a balance between traditional pedagogical practices and digital approaches, ensuring that core skills such as reading, writing, and critical thinking remain central to English language learning.

Curriculum Redesign: Curriculum planners need to integrate digital tools meaningfully into language lessons rather than treating them as add-ons. Activities should be designed to align with learning outcomes and assessment practices.

Equity and Access: Policymakers and institutions must address the digital divide by providing subsidized devices, community-based digital hubs, or shared resources for disadvantaged learners.

Student Engagement Strategies: Teachers should be trained to adopt interactive methodologies such as gamification, storytelling, and project-based learning reduce distraction and enhance active participation in digital environments.

Institutional Support: School administrations should develop a supportive ecosystem where parents, teachers, and policymakers collaboratively promote the benefits of technology-enabled English learning.



## Conclusion

The integration of digital learning tools into English Language Teaching holds immense promise for transforming classrooms into dynamic, learner-centered spaces. However, the study reveals that teachers face significant challenges ranging from infrastructural limitations and inadequate training to socio-cultural resistance and student disengagement. These barriers underscore the need for a multi-dimensional approach that addresses both technological and pedagogical gaps. For digital learning tools to achieve their full potential in ELT, teachers must be equipped with adequate resources, continuous professional training, and institutional backing. At the same time, learners must be provided equitable access to technology to ensure inclusive growth. By adopting a balanced, context-sensitive approach, digital tools can evolve from being perceived as obstacles to becoming powerful enablers of English language proficiency in the 21st century. Overcoming these challenges will not only empower English teachers but also enrich students' learning experiences, preparing them to thrive in a global, digitally interconnected world.

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## Morph-Dependency Model for *Upamā*

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### Abstract

The development of a comprehensive dependency parser for Sanskrit remains a key research goal, requiring manually annotated corpora and treebanks for training. Since figures of speech are integral to Sanskrit poetry, this study analyses *upamā* through dependency structures. Our proposed *upamā* dependency model offers fresh insights into rhetorical analysis and contributes to existing Sanskrit treebanks. We present a sample treebank of *upamā* instances from the second canto of *Raghuvamśam*, featuring manually drawn dependency trees that highlight the structure and aesthetics of *upamā*. Additionally, each instance includes a morph-dependency tree, revealing its grammatical composition. This study illustrates the benefits of integrating dependency parsing with literary analysis and proposes a foundational framework for modelling *upamā* based on the selected text.

**Keywords:** Dependency, treebank, *upamā*, *raghuvamśam*

### 1. Introduction and Survey of Literature

Sanskrit poetry is more than grammatically correct sentences; it incorporates metres, sentiments, and figures of speech. Studies, such as Gajjam and Kulkarni (2019), highlight its higher cognitive demand compared to prose. The need for specialised processing is evident in the development of a Sanskrit dependency parser (Kulkarni et al., 2019), which relies on annotated

treebanks. This paper presents a dependency treebank dedicated to *upamā*<sup>1</sup>. Dependency structures effectively capture the beauty and essence of similes and contribute to computational purposes. Existing Sanskrit treebanks, such as Universal Dependencies (Dwivedi & Guha, 2017), the Sanskrit treebank (Kulkarni et. al., 2020) and those for Vedic Sanskrit (Hellwig et al., 2020) provide a foundation, but this study enhances them with additional details for analysing *upamā*.

As a key *alankāra*, *upamā* belongs to the *arthālaṅkāra* category, emphasising meaning over wordplay. It has been a consistent element across Sanskrit rhetorical traditions, with its standard definition<sup>2</sup> elaborated in the *Udyota* commentary<sup>3</sup>. The four essential elements of *upamā* are summarised in Table 1.

<i>upameya</i>	object compared
<i>upamāna</i>	object compared to
<i>sādhāraṇadharmā</i>	Similar property
<i>sādharmyadyotakaśabda</i>	term signifying similitude

Table 1. Components of *upamā*

This study examines instances of *upamā* from the second canto of *Raghuvamśam*, a masterpiece by *Kālidāsa*, renowned for his use of similes. Among the numerous similes found across its 19 cantos, selected examples from the *Nandinīvarapradāna*<sup>4</sup> episode are analysed and illustrated in this study. We follow the tagging guidelines of Ramakrishnamacharyulu (2009) and the *Samsadhani* dependency relations by Kulkarni et al. (2020). The *upamā* dependency tree is structured using the symbol and tag scheme outlined in Tables 2 and 3.

Numbers 1- 7	Respective cases
→	Compound relation
Pink box	<i>upameya</i>
Purple box	<i>upamāna</i>
Blue box	<i>sādharmyadyotaka</i>

<sup>1</sup> A figure of speech involving comparison based on common properties.

<sup>2</sup> *Mammaṭa*, author of *Kāvyaaprakāśa*, defines *upamā* as “*sādharmyamupamā bhede*”. Jha (1967: 401) translates it as, “when there is similarity of properties while there is difference between objects themselves, it is *upamā*.”

<sup>3</sup> “*Upamānopameyayorbhede sati vākyaarthopaskāraṁ camatkārisādhāraṇadharmavattvam upamā*” (Abhyankar, 1929: 438). It means, *upamā* is a similar property, lying in two inherently different objects, that caters to the sentence meaning.

<sup>4</sup> In this episode, King *Dilīpa* and Queen *Sudakṣiṇā* serve the divine cow *Nandinī* to beget a child.

Green box	<i>samānadharma</i>
Yellow tags	Sentential relations
Boxes with red/ blue outline	<i>bimba-pratibimba bhāva</i> (Mirrored objects)
Colourful arrows	Sequence, correspondence

Table 2. Symbols and their meanings

<i>kartā</i>	Subject
<i>karma</i>	Object
<i>karaṇam</i>	Instrument
<i>adhikaraṇam</i>	Locus
<i>śaṣṭhī-sambandhaḥ</i>	Genitive
<i>kriyāviśeṣaṇam</i>	Adverb
<i>viśeṣaṇam</i>	Adjective/ modifier
<i>anuyogī</i>	<i>upameya</i> (the object compared)
<i>pratiyogī</i>	<i>upamāna</i> (the object compared to)

Table 3. Tags and their Meanings

## 2. Features of the Dependency treebank of *upamā*

### 2.1. Unfolding *upamā*

A dependency tree structures head-modifier relations using defined tags. To analyse *upamā*, we present three progressive dependency trees per instance, illustrating its depth step by step. Verse 32, depicted in Figures 1, 2, and 3, describes King *Dilīpa*'s fury upon failing to protect the divine cow from a lion. The *upamā* compares *upameya Dilīpa* to the *upamāna* serpent—both possessing immense power yet restrained by external forces.

- Figure 1 identifies the simile within dependency relations for basic comprehension.
- Figure 2 (morph-dependency tree) maps syntactic relations through labelled arrows, clarifying grammatical structure.
- Figure 3 delves deeper into word components, distinguishing root and termination levels, following the morpho-syntactic analysis guidelines of Kulkarni et al. (2010:113).

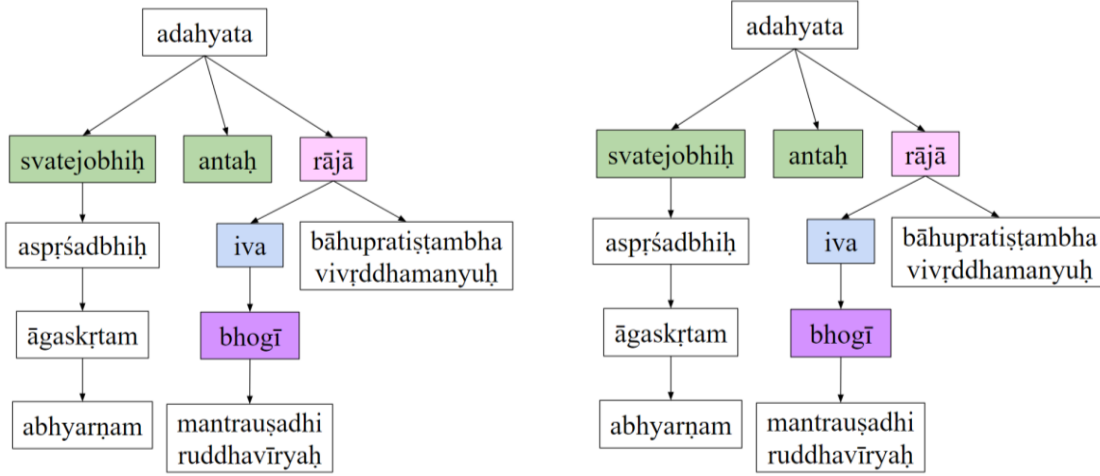


Figure 1. Dependency tree of verse 32, Figure 2. Morph-dependency tree of verse 32

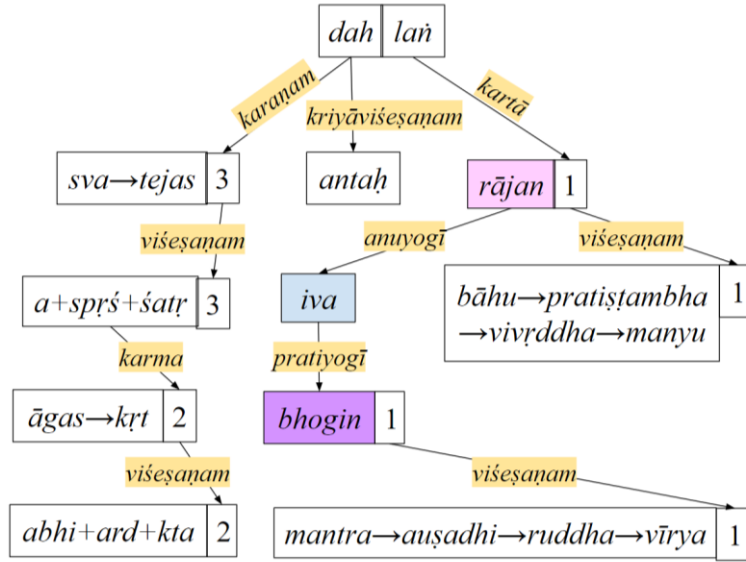


Figure 3. Internal morph-dependency tree of verse 32

## 2.2. Types of *upamā*

We aim to help readers identify types of *upamā* through this treebank, based on 25 categories outlined in *Kāvya prakāśa*. By analysing the dependency tree, we provide an easy way to classify *upamā* using colour-coding and morph-dependency details for a basic three-fold classification (Table 4).

Based on the components present	<i>pūrṇā</i>	<i>luptā</i>	-
Based on <i>sādharmyadyotaka</i>	<i>śrautī</i>	<i>ārthī</i>	-
Based on the morphology of the compared	<i>vākyagā</i>	<i>samāsagā</i>	<i>taddhitagā</i>

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Table 4. Classification of *upamā* according to *Kāvya prakāśa*

### 2.2.1. *Pūrṇā* and *Luptā*

The colour shades and tags indicate whether a simile is *pūrṇā* (complete) or *luptā* (elliptical). For example, Figure 4 (Verse 7, Nandargikar, 1897: 39) lacks a green box, indicating it is a *sādhāraṇadharmaluptā upamā*, where the description of similitude is absent. Figure 5 (Verse 15, Nandargikar, 1897: 40) lacks a blue box linking the *upameya* and *upamāna*, as well as the *anuyogī* and *pratiyogī* tags, identifying it as a *dyotakaluptā* simile, where the word denoting similarity is missing.

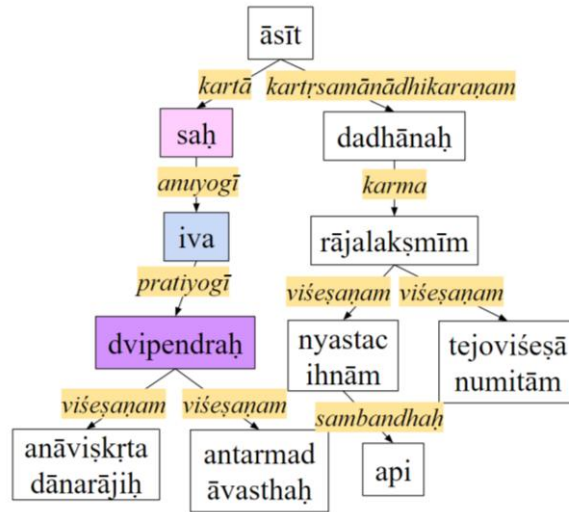


Figure 4. Morph-dependency tree of Verse 7 showing *sādhāraṇadharmaluptā* simile

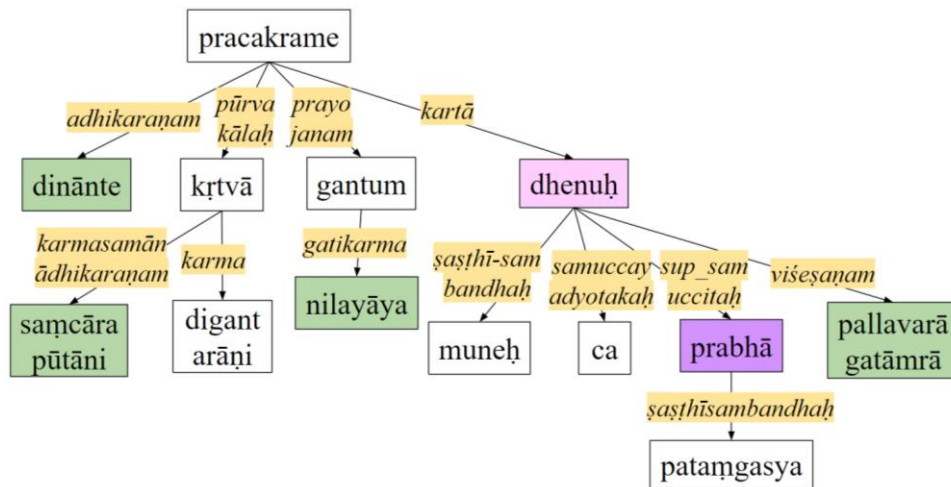


Figure 5. Morph-dependency tree of verse 15 showing *dyotakaluptā* simile

In this data, we observe that the *sādhāraṇadharmā* is often elided in similes associated with *karma-kāraka*. For similes linked to a *kartā*, the verb typically expresses the occasion-specific *sādhāraṇadharmā*<sup>5</sup>. Additionally, verses 15 and 73 feature multiple green boxes, indicating that more than one *sādhāraṇadharmā* is shared between the *upameya* and *upamāna*. In such cases, wordplay allows the description of objects to apply to both elements, with the simile often involving a pun. For instance, in verse 73 (Nandargikar, 1897: 62), the word *navodaya* refers both to King *Dilīpa*'s return to his capital and the rise of the moon, with the attributes<sup>6</sup> fitting both *Dilīpa* and the moon perfectly.

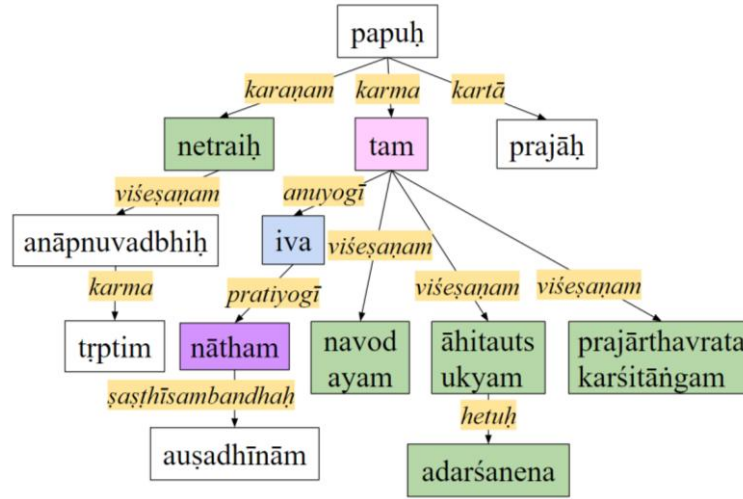


Figure 6. Morph-dependency tree of verse 7 showing a simile accompanied by a pun

## 2.2.2. Śrautī and Ārthī

The distinction between *śrautī* and *ārthī upamā* depends on how quickly one perceives the beauty in the similitude. *Śrautī* is grasped instantly with all its components, whereas *ārthī* involves *āsvādavilamba*<sup>7</sup>—a delay in realising the similarity and its elements. The *dyotaka* plays a key role in triggering this process<sup>8</sup>. In a dependency tree, this classification can be partially identified by the presence of markers like ‘*iva*, *yathā*,’ etc.

<sup>5</sup> See for instance: *anvagacchat* in verses 2 and 6, *pāsi* in verse 48, *ādhatta* in verse 75.

<sup>6</sup> 1) *adarśana* (non-appearance) - The king had stayed in the *tapovana* for a long time; the moon is not visible on no moon day 2) *autsukya*- eagerness on the part of people to get at least one glimpse 3) *prajāṛthavratakarṣitāṅga* - Emaciated limbs of the king due to observance of a vow for *prajā* i.e. child. Reduced phases of the moon as he too observes a vow for *prajā* i.e., the people, the world. He allows the gods to drink him hence, fades away 4) *netraiḥ papuḥ*- (Kale, 1922: 447) *sādhāraṇadharmā pānamucyate* (Nandargikar, 1897: 884)

<sup>7</sup> ‘*ārthyāmupamānopameyanirṇayavilambena-āsvādavilambaḥ; tadabhāvaḥ śrautyām*’ from *Udyota* commentary (Abhyankar, 1929: 444)

<sup>8</sup> ‘*yathevādisābdānāmupādāne śrautī; tulyādīnām śabdānām prayoge ārthī*’ from *Pradīpa* commentary (ibid: 442)



### 2.2.3. *Vākyagā, Samāśagā and Taddhitagā*

An internal morph-dependency tree helps determine whether a simile appears in a sentence, a compound, or a word with a specific affix. In this data, 19 out of 20 instances fall under the *samāśagā* category, as *iva* is commonly present and always compounded<sup>9</sup>. Parameters<sup>10</sup> like *bhinnavibhaktikāṭva* (different cases) and *asamastatva* (non-compound) help identify *vākyagā upamā*, as case markings indicate grammatical roles. For example, Verse 9 (Nandargikar, 1897: 38, Figure 7) is the only *vākyagā upamā* in this dataset, where King *Dilīpa* is compared to *Varuṇa* based on their shared role in law enforcement. Additionally, the position of *iva*<sup>11</sup> (linked to the verb) suggests that this verse also exemplifies *utprekṣā* (another figure of speech).

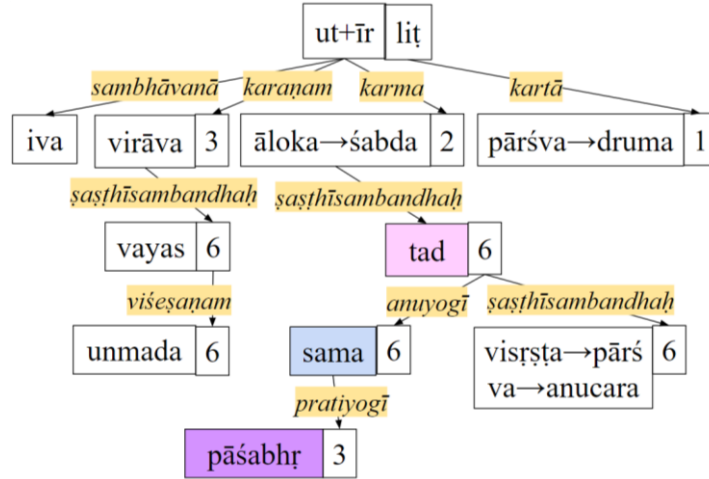


Figure 7. Morph-dependency tree of verse 9 showing *vākyagā* simile

### 2.3. Denoting *bimba-pratibimba-bhāva*

*Upamā* compares two inherently different objects based on a strikingly similar property. However, sometimes, similarity extends beyond an object to its entire environment. *Bimba-pratibimba-bhāva*<sup>12</sup> refers to this similitude within the broader context of explicitly compared

<sup>9</sup> ‘ivena nityasamāsaḥ’ from *Kāvyaaprakāśa* (ibid: 443)

<sup>10</sup> ‘upamānādīpadāni catvāryapi yatrāsamastāni bhinnavibhaktikāni sā vākyagā’ from *Pradīpa* commentary (Ibid: 441)

<sup>11</sup> ‘ivādīnāmupamānamātrānvitatā’ from *Pradīpa* commentary (Abhyankar, 1929: 450). In *upamā*, *sadharmyadyotaka* is connected to the *upamāna* only.

<sup>12</sup> This concept is central to *drṣṭānta* and *prativastūpamā* (Mishra, 2015: 67). *Udyota*, a commentary on *Kāvyaaprakāśa* (Abhyankar, 1929: 445), also highlights *bimba-pratibimba-bhāva* in an *upamā* example. Following this approach, we identified this phenomenon in most *upamā* instances in our data and represented it with shaded boxes in our diagrams for clarity.



objects. It appears in various forms. At times, *upameya* and *upamāna* share comparable adjectives, especially when *sādhāraṇadharmā* is elided<sup>13</sup>. Sometimes, a primary *upameya* (usually *kartā*) is supported by subordinate *upameya*-s like *karma* and *karaṇam*. Together, they form the *bimba*, reflected<sup>14</sup> in their corresponding *pratiyogī*-s—*upamāna-kartā*, *upamāna-karma*, etc.

To determine if these mirrored objects (called so by Desiraju, 2010) qualify as separate similes, we examine verses 2 and 75. Verse 2 (Nandargikar, 1897: 36) contains 2–3 *upameya-upamāna* pairs with a single *dyotaka*, *iva*. To meet *iva*’s expectancy, we create two separate trees, each with one *upameya-upamāna* pair (Figure 8). By merging them with *iva* as the principal simile and marking others as mirrored objects, we derive the full verse’s dependency tree (Figure 9), demonstrating the necessity of *bimba-pratibimba-bhāva*.

In verse 75 (Nandargikar, 1897: 63), a cluster of *upamā* (Figure 10) features two distinct similes, each with its own *iva*. Both *kartā* and *karma* are compared to different objects, with the *dyotaka* appearing twice. Therefore, cases where a single *dyotaka* governs multiple *upameya-upamāna* pairs should be treated as instances of mirrored objects.

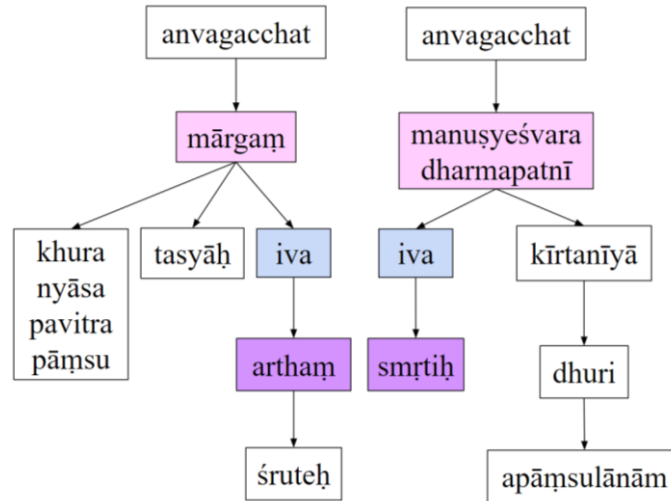


Figure 8. Separate the dependency trees of pairs of *upameya* and *upamāna* from Verse 2

<sup>13</sup> For instance: verses 7, 37, etc.

<sup>14</sup> See dependency trees of verses 2, 10, 15, 20, etc.

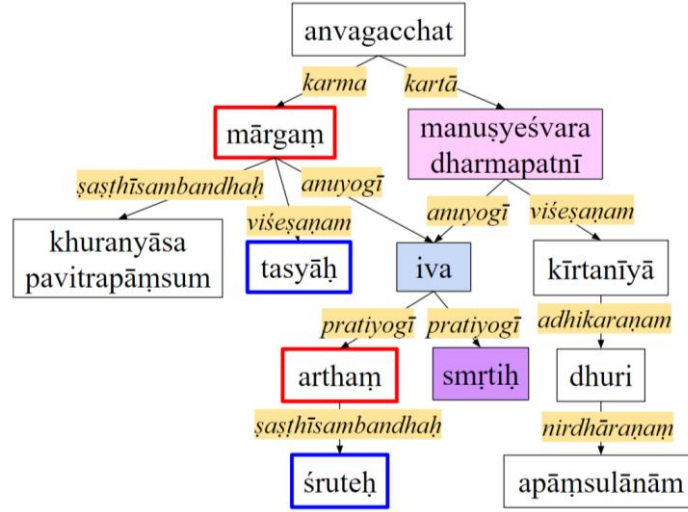


Figure 9. Morph-dependency tree of verse 2 showing a simile with mirrored objects

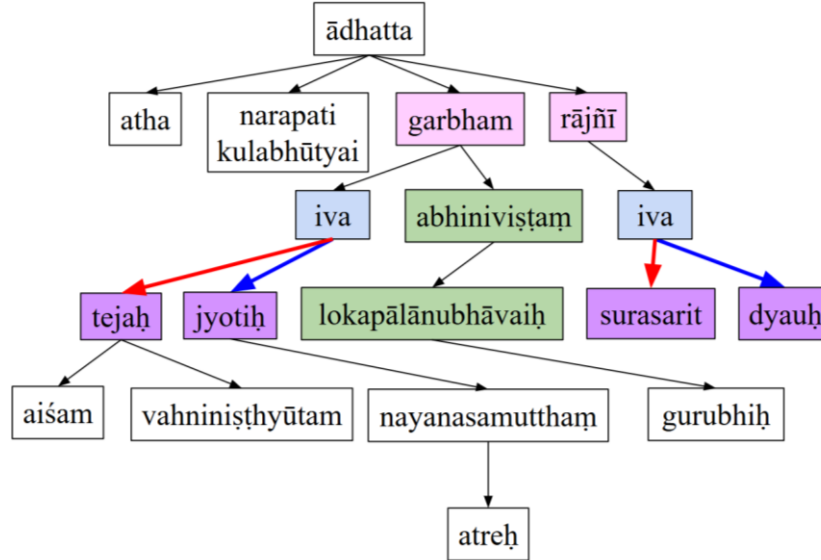


Figure 10. Dependency tree of verse 75

## 2.4. Additional benefits of the dependency model

A verse's *khaṇḍānvaya*<sup>15</sup> can be derived from its dependency tree, which visually represents a *khaṇḍānvita* sentence (Kulkarni & Das, 2012). This aids comprehension and captures sequential similarity within the structure. Matching arrows effectively denote correspondence, as seen in verses 6 and 75. In verse 6 (Figure 11), the simile highlights the king's devotion to serving the cow—wholeheartedly following her, forsaking his royal status and even himself. This

<sup>15</sup> It is a method of analysis of text with verb being the head and other relations being its modifiers.

dedication parallels how a shadow clings to a person, never leaving or separating from them.

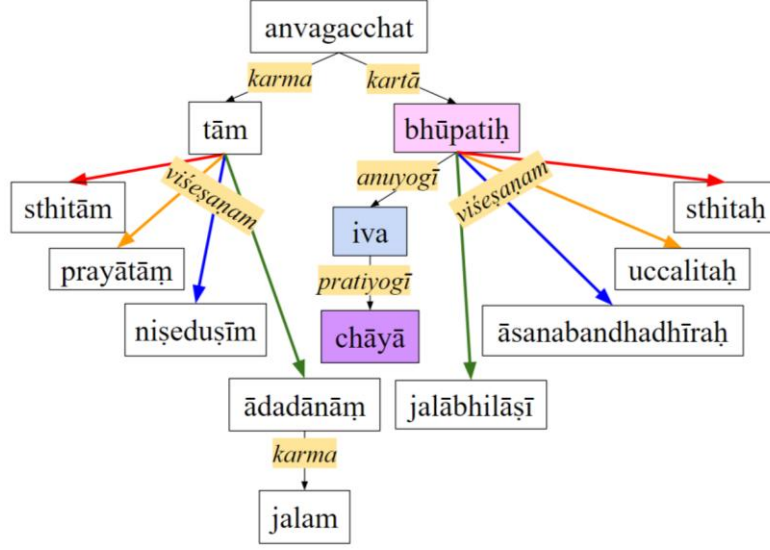


Figure 11. Morph-dependency tree of verse 6 showing a sequence through arrows

### 3. Concluding remarks

The previous sections explored how integrating dependency and *upamā* offers various advantages. *Kāraka* analysis within morph dependency has led to a potential template for simile dependency. Constructing dependency trees for multiple similes revealed a consistent *kāraka* assignment pattern, forming the basis for the prototype template of *upamā* dependency (Figure 12). By substituting values in this template, we can generate dependency trees for different *upamā* instances.

Since poetry is an artistic expression, rigid modelling is challenging. However, we propose a minimalistic framework based on the *kāraka* variations in the second canto of *Raghuvamśam*. This framework includes nodes for *vākya*-relations, various *kāra*kas and the *upamā* relation at the second level, as similes primarily modify *kartā* or *karma*. The second canto contains 20 simile instances, summarised in Table 5.

Associated with <i>kartā</i>	11	Associated with <i>karma</i>	8
<i>pūrṇā</i>	6	<i>luptā</i>	14
<i>śrautī</i>	13	<i>ārthī</i>	7
<i>vākyagā</i>	1	<i>samāsagā</i>	19

Table 5. Classification of similes from *Raghuvamśam* Canto II according to their types

This study catalogues the similes in the second canto of *Raghuvamśam*, classifies them as

per *Kāvyaṣaṣa* and presents manually drawn dependency and tagged morph-dependency trees for each instance<sup>16</sup>. The next step is to train existing parsers to better process figures of speech. Beyond machine training, this treebank will aid research, information retrieval and education.

Currently, only the second canto has been analysed, but this approach can extend to all *Raghuvamśam* cantos and other rhetorical figures involving similarity and comparison. An indigenous treebank dedicated to figures of speech would encourage further study. The tag set can be refined to include *upamā*-specific elements like *sādhāraṇadharmā* and *pratibimbīta-upameya*. Elided *upamā* components can be marked with dotted lines in dependency trees for clarity. Additionally, we plan to modify the third dependency tree in several instances to better represent similes within compounds.

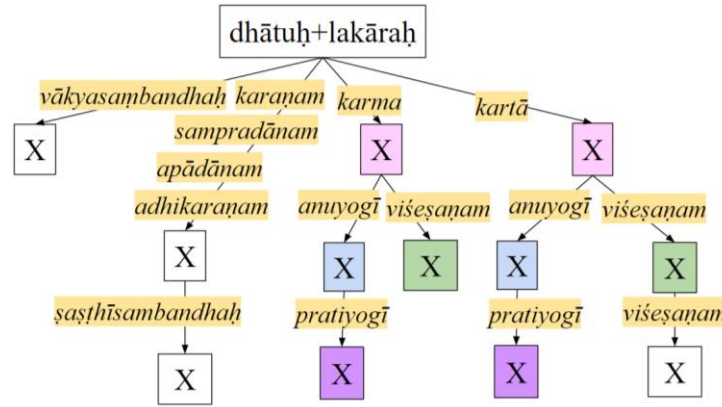


Figure 12. Template of dependency model for *upamā*

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<sup>16</sup> Link to our sample Dependency treebank of *upamā*:

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1Lu4JRTomCwSmPjNXuS3oDFCOfeZy1KV2ug73iQUjls/edit?usp=sharing>

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## A Critical Discourse Study of Domestic Violence in Selected Nigerian Newspapers Headlines

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### Abstract

This study conducts a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of domestic violence representations in Nigerian online newspapers, specifically focusing on headlines from Vanguard and Daily Trust published between May 2024 and February 2025. The pervasive nature of domestic violence as a significant social issue necessitates examining how media language influences public perception and policy discourse. This research is vital as it fills a notable gap in existing literature, which often neglects the linguistic and discursive strategies used in news reporting on this topic. The main aims are to identify and describe the critical discourse features in these headlines, analyse how these features reflect social context, ideology, and power relations, and evaluate the media's role in shaping public understanding of domestic violence in Nigeria. Using a qualitative research approach and Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional model of CDA for analysis, the study purposively selects and reviews ten news headlines. The findings show that media discourse is a powerful tool for expressing power dynamics, ideological positions, and hegemonic structures. Newspapers employ language that can either reinforce patriarchal norms or challenge them, portray domestic violence as a gendered issue (GBV) or a universal problem, and influence public consciousness through strategic lexical choices and framing. This research contributes to the fields of media studies, discourse analysis, and gender studies by offering a nuanced understanding of the interconnected relationship between language, media, and social power, ultimately calling for more responsible and transformative media practices in reporting domestic violence.

**Keywords:** Critical Discourse Analysis, Domestic Violence, Media reports, News Headlines

## Introduction

Domestic violence constitutes a profound and widespread social crisis in Nigeria, affecting individuals across gender, age, and socioeconomic backgrounds. As the primary channel for information dissemination and public understanding, the media plays an essential role in shaping the narratives that define this issue for the public. Language, as a socially constructed discourse (Boyd et al., 2015), is not only reflective but also constitutive of social reality. The way newspapers frame headlines on domestic violence, through specific lexical choices, grammatical structures, and rhetorical strategies, can greatly influence public perception, legitimise certain viewpoints, marginalise others, and ultimately shape policy responses. The background to this study is rooted in the complex interconnection between language, media, and social issues, where the media serves as a vital system for creating and spreading messages that influence cultural norms and social relationships (Silverstone, 2007). The problem this research addresses is the relative lack of linguistic and discourse-analytic examination applied to how domestic violence is reported in the Nigerian press. Although many studies have explored domestic violence from sociological, psychological, and legal perspectives (Aihie, 2009; Oluremi, 2015; Ibegbulam et al., 2022), and some have looked into media coverage (Adeline et al., 2020; Ekweonu, 2020), a significant gap remains in understanding the power relations, ideologies, and hegemonic practices embedded within the language of these reports. Therefore, this study aims to critically investigate how domestic violence is constructed discursively in selected Nigerian newspapers. Its goals include identifying key discourse features in headlines, analysing how these features reflect social context and ideology, examining the media's influence on public understanding, and exploring points of similarity and difference in vocabulary. The importance of this research lies in its potential to initiate a deeper, linguistically-informed understanding of media framing in Nigeria, providing valuable insights for media practitioners, policymakers, and scholars in communication, linguistics, and gender studies, thereby contributing to a more informed and critical public discourse on domestic violence.

## Literature Review

A comprehensive review of existing literature reveals a multifaceted body of work on domestic violence in Nigeria, yet one that often avoids a rigorous discourse-analytic lens. Studies such as

those by Shayestefar et al. (2023) and Rajesh and Gagan (2018) have extensively documented the psychological and mental health impacts of domestic violence, providing important empirical evidence of its devastating effects on victims. However, these studies mainly treat language as a transparent medium rather than an object of inquiry itself, failing to analyse how the discourse surrounding the issue can sustain or reduce its stigma. Similarly, research by Ibegbulam et al. (2022) and Oluremi (2015) focuses on intervention strategies and the role of professionals, emphasising societal response mechanisms but not critically engaging with how these responses are linguistically mediated and influenced by pre-existing media narratives.

Within media-focused research, scholars such as Adeline et al. (2020) and Ekweonu (2020) have analysed newspaper coverage of domestic violence, but their approaches are primarily quantitative content analyses that count frequencies and themes without exploring the detailed linguistic features that reveal power and ideology. For example, while Adeline et al. (2020) might observe that The Punch newspaper reported more cases of domestic violence, their study does not critically examine how these cases were presented, whether victims were portrayed as powerless, whether perpetrators were mystified, or what ideological assumptions influence the choice of terms like "lovers' quarrel" versus "premeditated assault." This represents a significant gap, as it overlooks the constitutive power of language. Agbese (2021) investigates intimate partner violence in newspapers but again, from a thematic perspective, lacking the methodological tool of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to uncover the hidden persuasive elements in the texts. The work by Agbasimelo and Ignatius (2024) marks progress, as it focuses on violence against men, an often-neglected area, yet it still does not employ a CDA framework to analyse the discursive strategies that facilitate such reporting or challenge hegemonic gender narratives.

Internationally, scholars like Buchner et al. (2023) and Masood and Tehseem (2022) have incorporated linguistic perspectives, but as identified in the provided documents, they often do so without deploying a dedicated CDA framework, thus missing the opportunity to systematically connect textual features to broader social power structures. The few studies that apply CDA, such as those by Ejiaso (2024), who uses Fairclough's model, have not sufficiently focused on the unique context of Nigerian newspapers as key social actors. Therefore, this current study departs from and builds upon the existing literature by applying a rigorous CDA framework, specifically Fairclough's model, to a curated sample of Nigerian newspaper headlines. It seeks to fill the



identified gap by demonstrating that the fight against domestic violence is not only fought in homes and courtrooms but also in the linguistic choices made in newsrooms, arguing that a critical awareness of these discursive practices is a necessary precondition for transformative social change and more accountable journalism.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study is firmly based on the theoretical foundations of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), primarily utilising the model developed by Norman Fairclough. CDA is not just a method for analysing language but a philosophical and analytical approach that considers discourse as a form of social practice. It maintains that every instance of language use is embedded within and contributes to the creation, sustenance, or challenge of social structures, power relations, and ideologies (Fairclough, 1995). Fairclough's three-dimensional model offers a strong framework for this investigation, suggesting that any discursive event can be analysed across three interconnected levels: text, discursive practice, and social practice.

The first dimension, text, involves a detailed linguistic analysis of the headlines themselves. This includes examining vocabulary (for example, the use of "suffer" versus "experience," "victim" versus "survivor"), grammar (such as active versus passive voice, nominalisation), and rhetorical structure (such as metaphors, presuppositions). For instance, a headline like "Nigerian men suffer domestic violence too" can be analysed to understand how the word "suffer" conveys intensity and victimhood, while "too" positions men's experience in relation to the more commonly reported violence against women, thereby making a specific ideological claim.

The second dimension, discursive practice, links the text to its production, distribution, and consumption processes. This study looks at how headlines are created by journalistic institutions like Vanguard and Daily Trust to reveal the news values at play, which sources are quoted (such as experts, ministers, victims), and how the text might be interpreted by readers. This dimension recognises that media discourse is not neutral but a result of institutional practices and conventions that shape the final text.

The third and most vital dimension, social practice, places the discursive event within the broader socio-cultural and ideological context. This involves examining how the discourse on domestic violence in these newspapers reflects, reinforces, or challenges existing power imbalances,

hegemonic gender ideologies (such as patriarchy and feminism), and social inequalities in Nigeria. It raises questions like: Does the discourse sustain the idea of male dominance? Does it challenge the silence surrounding male victimhood? Does it promote a liberal ideology centred on individual rights and state intervention? By mapping the findings from the textual analysis onto this wider social context, this framework enables a critical understanding of how media discourse is both influenced by and influences the social environment, making it an essential tool for a study aiming to explore the significant ideological work performed by newspaper headlines on a crucial issue like domestic violence.

### **Methodology**

This research adopts a qualitative design, employing a descriptive and interpretive approach to analyse the discursive strategies used in selected online newspaper headlines. The study utilised a purposive sampling technique to select data most relevant to the research objectives. The data consists of ten news headlines: five from Vanguard newspaper and five from Daily Trust newspaper, all published between May 2024 and February 2025. These two newspapers were chosen due to their significant online presence, nationwide coverage, high circulation, and influence on public discourse in Nigeria (Adeyinka & Oyebode, 2019; Soola, 1995). Their prominence ensures that the analysed discourse reaches a wide audience and significantly influences public opinion. The headlines were purposively selected from the newspapers' online archives based on their direct relevance to the topic of domestic violence and their potential to provide rich insights into the research questions.

The primary method of data collection involved directly downloading these headlines from the official online platforms of Vanguard and Daily Trust. The specific URLs for each headline are included in the appendices to ensure transparency and verifiability. The collected data was analysed using Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). The analysis proceeded in two main phases: first, a detailed textual analysis of the linguistic features of each headline (for example, word choice, transitivity, modality); and second, an interpretive analysis linking these features to discursive practices (journalistic production) and broader social practices (ideology, power, hegemony). This method enables a deep, nuanced understanding of how language functions ideologically within the context of Nigerian media

reporting on domestic violence.

### **Data Analysis and Discussion**

This section offers an analysis of ten purposively chosen headlines, five from Vanguard and five from Daily Trust, published between May 2024 and February 2025. The analysis adheres to Fairclough's model, progressing from description to interpretation.

#### **Analysis of Vanguard Headlines (May 2024 - February 2025)**

1. Headline (May 2024): "Tinubu vows to end gender-based violence, promote girls' education" (Source: Vanguard, May 2024).

The headline uses a declarative structure with "Tinubu" as the active agent, performing acts of "vowing," "ending," and "promoting." The term "vow" conveys a strong commitment, while "gender-based violence" frames the issue as primarily targeting a specific gender. "Promote girls' education" is linked as a solution, suggesting an ideological connection between education and reducing violence. The headline quotes the President, a powerful political authority, which adds credibility and indicates state-level concern. This is a typical journalistic practice of using elite sources to frame an issue. It reflects a liberal ideology where the state is seen as the protector of citizens' rights. It also reinforces state dominance and authority to enact change, while framing the solution within educational empowerment, aligning with neoliberal development discourses.

2. Headline (October 2024): "Gender-Based Violence: OAIC, UN women partner to educate religious leaders" (Source: Vanguard, October 2024).

The headline emphasises the process of "partnering" and "educating." The actors involved include both international and local NGOs (such as "OAIC, UN women"), with the aim of educating "religious leaders," a group holding significant social influence in Nigeria. The decision to focus on the education of religious leaders recognises their role as guardians of social norms. It serves as a discursive strategy to combat domestic violence by engaging influential community figures. This reflects an ideology that values the deep-rooted influence of religion and culture in upholding or challenging gender norms. It signals a move towards working with traditional structures to foster social change, showcasing a complex power dynamic between global organisations and local religious groups or institutions.

3. Headline (August 2024): “Untold stories of domestic violence survivors in Lagos” (Source: Vanguard, August 2024).

The noun phrase "Untold stories" presupposes a history of silence and suppression. The word "survivors" is agentive and empowering, contrasting with the more passive "victims." This headline frames the report as giving voice to the voiceless, a common journalistic trope that highlights the media's role as a platform for marginalised narratives. It addresses the social practice of silence and stigma surrounding domestic violence. By focusing on "survivors" in "Lagos," it urbanises the issue, potentially reflecting wider societal problems such as economic stress in a megacity. It challenges hegemonic silence and empowers those who have experienced violence.

4. Headline (March 2025): “GBV: Silence of survivors hinders justice in Nigeria -- Stakeholders Lament” (Source: Vanguard, March 2025).

The headline establishes a cause-and-effect relationship: "Silence" (cause) "hinders justice" (effect). "Stakeholders lament" frames the response as one of frustration and helplessness from official bodies. The use of the term "stakeholders" is a broad, institutional label that encompasses both government and non-government actors, creating a sense of collective concern. This underscores a critical failure in the social practice of justice delivery. It implicitly critiques a system that places the burden of achieving justice on the survivor, thereby exposing a hegemonic structure where the state's apparatus is ineffective without the victim's vocal participation, thereby revealing social inequality.

5. Headline (February 2025): “My wife beats me for disciplining our children', man laments in Church” (Source: Vanguard, February 2025).

This is a direct quotation framed by the reporting clause "man laments in Church." The verb "beats" is stark and physical, and the reason given ("for disciplining our children") introduces a narrative of role conflict. The decision to include a direct quote from a male victim in a religious setting is highly significant. It personalises the story and uses the setting (Church) to emphasise the search for solace and the irony of violence occurring within a moral institution. This headline powerfully challenges hegemonic patriarchal ideology that presumes male perpetrators and female victims. It

reveals the social reality of male victimhood and the stigma that often leads to silence. The venue ("Church") also critiques the role of religious institutions in mediating family conflicts and reinforcing certain gender norms.

### **Analysis of Daily Trust Headlines (December 2024 - February 2025)**

6. Headline (December 2024): "Breaking the Cycle of Domestic Violence" (Source: Daily Trust, December 2024).

The word "Breaking" serves as a powerful, active verb that suggests force and decisive action. The metaphor "Cycle" conceptualises domestic violence as an intergenerational and recurring pattern that is difficult to escape. This headline is solution-oriented, common in advocacy journalism, and acts as a call to action for the readership. It advocates for intervention and rupture. The "cycle" metaphor draws on psychological and sociological understandings of violence, framing it as a social illness that requires collective effort to break, thereby assigning societal responsibility.

7. Headline (Date N/A): "GBV: I tell my daughters to retaliate if their husbands slap them" (Source: Daily Trust).

This is a first-person account. The verb "retaliate" is highly controversial, implying a response of violence with violence. "Slap" downplays physical abuse, while "GBV" categorises it. Quoting a parent offers a personal, though contentious, perspective. It is a discursive strategy meant to provoke strong reader reactions and debate. This reveals a complex ideology. On one hand, it can be seen as a form of resistance against accepted gender-based subjugation, empowering women to defend themselves. On the other, it promotes a cycle of counter-violence, which may perpetuate the very violence it aims to address. It reflects a desperate response within a social context where formal justice systems are seen as ineffective.

8. Headline (Date N/A): "Sexual offences, domestic violence perpetrated by victims trusted ones -- Lagos CP" (Source: Daily Trust).

The passive voice in "perpetrated by victims' trusted ones" removes the actor from the syntactic subject position, subtly backgrounding them. However, the focus on "trusted ones" highlights the betrayal aspect. The source, "Lagos CP" (Commissioner of Police), is an authoritative official

source, which adds factual credibility and gravity to the statement. This headline reinforces the social reality that danger often lies within intimate spaces, challenging the stranger-danger paradigm. It underscores an ideology of betrayal and the abuse of trust, which is central to domestic violence, thereby shaping public awareness towards vigilance within familiar relationships.

9. Headline (Date N/A): “Domestic violence: Lagos Assembly seeks counselling units in schools” (Source: Daily Trust).

The headline depicts a government body, "Lagos Assembly," as the actor seeking a solution through "counselling units." The phrase "in schools" targets the youth. This reflects the discursive practice of reporting on policy proposals, portraying the government as proactive and institutional. It promotes a preventive and educational ideology. By focusing on schools, the government is seen as aiming to address the problem at its core by shaping young minds, advancing emotional literacy, and breaking the intergenerational "cycle" of violence. This exemplifies a hegemonic practice where the state wields its power through educational institutions.

10. Headline (Date N/A): “Spousal neglect: Women tell their stories” (Source: Daily Trust).

"Spousal neglect" expands the idea of domestic violence beyond physical harm to include emotional and psychological abuse. "Women tell their stories" is an active phrase that gives women agency. This follows the practice of creating a space for personal narratives, aiming to foster empathy and awareness. It challenges the dominance of physical violence as the only "real" abuse, bringing a more subtle form of violence into public discussion. This aligns with feminist views that try to broaden the understanding of violence against women to include all types of patriarchal control and oppression, highlighting the power imbalances involved in neglect.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The analysis of the ten headlines shows that Nigerian newspapers are not just recorders of events but active shapers of the discourse on domestic violence through complex linguistic choices. The findings directly respond to the research questions, demonstrating a consistent use of critical discourse features. Power relations are evident through the quoting of influential figures (such as the President and the Police Commissioner) versus personal narratives from victims, highlighting a hierarchy of voices. Ideology is conveyed through lexical choices; for example, the use of

"gender-based violence" (GBV) by both newspapers—especially by Daily Trust—frames the issue from a gendered perspective, often implicitly emphasising female victimhood. Conversely, Vanguard's headline on male victimhood challenges this very ideology and reveals a hegemonic blind spot.

Hegemony is evident in the reinforcement of state power (Vanguard: "Tinubu vows...") and religious authority (Vanguard: "...educate religious leaders"), as well as in the challenge to patriarchal dominance (Vanguard: "My wife beats me"). Social inequality is emphasised in headlines discussing the silence that obstructs justice, exposing a system that fails its citizens. The media's role in shaping understanding is clear; for example, Daily Trust's "Breaking the Cycle" employs a powerful metaphor to influence public perception of the issue as a solvable social problem, while Vanguard's "Untold stories" present it as a hidden epidemic that needs to be exposed.

Regarding convergence and divergence, both newspapers view domestic violence as a serious social issue. However, a key difference lies in how they frame it: Vanguard adopts a slightly broader approach by explicitly including male victims, whereas the selected Daily Trust headlines consistently use the "GBV" frame, highlighting violence against women. This subtle difference in vocabulary can notably influence how readers perceive the extent and nature of the problem.

### **Conclusion**

This study aimed to critically examine the discourse surrounding domestic violence in Nigerian newspaper headlines. The findings conclusively show that these headlines are dense arenas of ideological and hegemonic struggle. Using Fairclough's CDA model, the analysis revealed how language is selectively employed to express power, promote ideologies (state intervention, liberalism, feminism, resistance), reinforce or challenge hegemonies (patriarchy, state power), and highlight social inequalities. The media plays a crucial role not only in reporting domestic violence but also in constructing it for the public, shaping perceptions, and potentially influencing agendas for public discourse and policy.

The implications for future research are considerable. Studies could broaden to include a larger corpus, add reader reception analysis to understand how these discourses are interpreted, or undertake comparative analyses with broadcast and social media. A specific study on the portrayal

of male victimhood would be especially valuable. Based on the findings, it is advisable for media practitioners to adopt a more critically aware approach to language use, avoiding terms that obscure violence or blame victims and promoting a frame that holds perpetrators accountable and recognises the issue's full complexity. Policymakers should acknowledge the media's influence in shaping public opinion and work together to promote accurate and transformative messages. Ultimately, this research highlights that fighting domestic violence requires not only social and legal reforms but also a fundamental change in the language used to discuss it.

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## Appendices

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## A Cognitive Stylistic Analysis of Mind Style in The Parable of The Wicked Husbandman

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### Abstract

This study employs cognitive stylistic approaches to the parable of the Wicked Husbandman in Luke's Gospel, focusing on how linguistic features construct mental styles and influence interpretation. Using Text World Theory and Schema Theory, the analysis examines two English Bible translations, the New King James Version (NKJV) and the New International Version (NIV), to explore how differences in diction and syntax affect meaning. Findings reveal that the vineyard owner's mental style is encoded through material and mental processes that highlight patience, persistence, and eventual justice, whereas the tenants' worldview is shaped through verbs of violence and rebellion, indicating their rejection of authority. Deictic structures frame the parable within familiar cultural schemas of land ownership, inheritance, and stewardship, guiding readers towards theological interpretations of obedience and judgment. Variations in translation add nuance: the NKJV's elevated diction underscores solemnity and divine authority, while the NIV's straightforward phrasing stresses immediacy and human conflict. The study contributes to stylistics by extending cognitive frameworks into biblical discourse and to biblical interpretation by demonstrating how translation shapes worldview construction. It concludes that parables are linguistically rich sites where language, cognition, and theology intersect to influence moral and spiritual understanding.

**Keywords:** Cognitive stylistics, Mind style, Text World Theory, Schema Theory, Biblical parable, Gospel of Luke

## Introduction

Cognitive stylistics has become a vibrant interdisciplinary field, drawing on linguistics, psychology, and literary studies to explain how readers process and interpret texts. At its core, it examines how linguistic patterns trigger mental processes such as perception, memory, and schema activation, thereby shaping literary interpretation (Simpson, 2004; McIntyre, 2008). Stockwell (2002) characterises it as “a new way of thinking about literature,” one that places language within cognitive science, while Gavins and Steen (2003) emphasise its focus on the systematic description of linguistic features. This perspective broadens the scope of stylistics by highlighting cognition's role in textual engagement, showing that interpretation is not solely a linguistic act but also a cognitive one.

A central idea in cognitive stylistics is mind style, defined by Fowler (1977, p.103) as “any distinctive linguistic representation of an individual mental self.” Later refined to refer to the worldview of an author, narrator, or character (Fowler, 1996), mind style highlights how lexical, grammatical, and pragmatic choices encode specific perspectives. Leech and Short (2007) describe it as a way of capturing how a fictional world is understood, while Semino (2007) demonstrates how deviations in representation reveal unusual or striking viewpoints. Therefore, mind style provides a framework for analysing how texts linguistically construct mental worlds and influence interpretation.

Although mind style has been widely studied in modern fiction, poetry, and drama (Freeman, 2000; Semino & Culpeper, 2002; Hoover, 2004), its use in biblical texts remains limited. However, parables, as concise narratives with layered metaphorical and cultural meanings, are particularly well suited for such analysis. The parable of the Wicked Husbandman (Luke 20:9–19) demonstrates this richness: it uses familiar agricultural imagery, culturally embedded schemas of authority and inheritance, and stark contrasts in character behaviour to communicate theological truths. A cognitive stylistic approach helps us examine how these elements shape the mind styles of the vineyard owner, his servants, and the husbandmen, and how readers interpret meaning through linguistic cues.

This study applies Text World Theory (Werth, 1999; Gavins, 2007) and Schema Theory

(Rumelhart, 1980; Stockwell, 2002) to the parable in two English Bible translations: the New King James Version (NKJV) and the New International Version (NIV). Text World Theory describes how readers construct mental representations of narrative worlds through world-building elements and function-advancing propositions, while Schema Theory explains how prior cultural knowledge influences interpretation. Together, these frameworks enable analysis of how translation choices in diction and syntax affect the construction of mind styles.

This study aims to demonstrate how cognitive stylistic features in the NKJV and NIV influence the characters' perspectives and worldviews within the parable, and how translation mediates interpretation. In doing so, the research advances stylistics by applying cognitive frameworks to biblical discourse, and enhances biblical studies by offering new tools for analysing the linguistic and cognitive construction of meaning.

### **Aim and Objectives of the Study**

This study seeks to apply cognitive stylistic methods to the construction and interpretation of meaning in the parable of the Wicked Husbandman from the Gospel of Luke.

The objectives of the study are to:

- i. Analyse the cognitive stylistic features in the NKJV and NIV translations that build the mind styles of the vineyard owner, his servants, and the husbandmen.
- ii. Describe the different types of mind styles depicted in the parable and explain how these linguistic structures influence contrasting perspectives on authority, obedience, and rebellion.

### **Literature Review**

The idea of mind style has been a key concept in stylistics since Fowler (1977, p.103) described it as “any distinctive linguistic representation of an individual mental self.” Later, Fowler (1996, p.21) refined the term to reflect the worldview of an author, narrator, or character as expressed in a text’s ideational structure. This shows how lexical, grammatical, and discourse-level choices indicate unique perspectives. Leech and Short (2007) emphasise that these stylistic patterns reveal

how fictional minds perceive reality, demonstrating how narrative voices are linguistically formed.

Mind style has been widely employed in contemporary literature. Semino (2007), for example, illustrates how deviations in narrative perspective highlight unusual or distinctive worldviews, while McIntyre (2005) and Hoover (2004) demonstrate how stylistic features influence characterisation in prose fiction. Collectively, this research underscores the significance of mind style for analysing the connection between language and cognition. However, despite its potential, relatively limited work has been conducted on religious texts, where stylistic and cognitive aspects are equally significant.

Cognitive stylistics offers the broader framework within which 'mind style' operates. Stockwell (2002) describes it as combining linguistic analysis with insights from cognitive linguistics and psychology, aiming to understand how readers process and interpret texts. Gavins (2007) additionally highlights that cognitive stylistics explains the mental representations that readers construct during engagement with discourse. It focuses not only on textual features but also on how these features activate cognitive mechanisms such as schema activation, inference, and memory. This makes cognitive stylistics particularly useful for parables, which rely on simple linguistic forms but prompt complex interpretive activity.

## **Theoretical Framework**

Text World Theory (TWT), developed by Werth (1999) and Gavins (2007), provides a powerful tool for analysing how readers construct mental models of narrative worlds. TWT distinguishes between world-building elements (participants, time, and location) and function-advancing propositions (events, actions, and processes). These create layered text worlds that can shift through modality, perspective, or reported speech. In the parable of the Wicked Husbandman, such shifts highlight the contrasting perspectives of the vineyard owner, his servants, and the husbandmen, making TWT essential to analysing how mind styles are linguistically constructed (Aluya & Iangba, 2025).

Schema Theory, introduced by Rumelhart (1980) and applied to literature by Stockwell (2002), explains how background knowledge influences understanding. Schemas are structured mental

frameworks that guide meaning-making by enabling readers to interpret new information based on familiar cultural or experiential contexts. In biblical parables, schemas are essential: images of vineyards, servants, and inheritance resonate strongly with the socio-cultural world of first-century Palestine. Recognising these schemas helps clarify how mental styles are formed and how translation choices in the NKJV and NIV affect interpretation.

## **Empirical Review**

Several studies have applied cognitive stylistics to contemporary literary works, emphasising the importance of linguistic features in shaping unique mental worlds. For example, Krishnamurthy (2010) analysed the novel *The Poisonwood Bible* by Barbara Kingsolver, examining how the narrators' distinct voices, influenced by colonial and feminist discourses, reflect different perspectives. This work highlights the usefulness of mind style in uncovering character viewpoints, aligning with the current study's aim to explore the unique mind styles in the biblical narrative of the Wicked Husbandman (Aluya, 2016). However, while Krishnamurthy's research focused on prose fiction, the present study broadens these insights into biblical parables, which are culturally intricate and conceptually layered narratives.

Similarly, Areef (2016) applied cognitive stylistics to Simon's lyric "The Sound of Silence", demonstrating how figures of speech generate new metaphors and imagery. This work, like the present study, illustrates the usefulness of cognitive stylistics in revealing layers of meaning within literary texts. However, Areef's focus was on musical lyrics, whereas this study concentrates on a religious narrative, reflecting a significant difference in both genre and theoretical approach. The present study combines TWT and Schema Theory, contrasting with Areef's reliance on conceptual metaphor and schema theories.

Aluya and Uduma (2024) employed cognitive stylistics on short stories, examining how mind style is linguistically constructed using TWT and Schema Theory. While their research shares the same theoretical basis, it focuses on short stories, whereas the current study examines biblical parables, highlighting the distinct contribution of this research to cognitive stylistics in religious texts.

Kuczok (2018) examined the metaphor of sin in the English Bible, demonstrating how cultural

experiences and image schemas support the conceptualisation of sin. Although both studies focus on biblical texts, this research emphasises metaphor, whereas the present study employs TWT and Schema Theory to investigate how linguistic features shape mental worlds and inform theological interpretation. Kuczok's findings highlight the importance of schema theory in understanding biblical language, aligning with the current study's theoretical framework, though with a different focus on metaphor.

Fozilovna (2020) and Suleiman et al. (2023) examined the mind styles of suffering protagonists in short stories and novels, using cognitive stylistics to analyse how language reveals internal states such as fear, endurance, and frustration. Their studies emphasise the usefulness of cognitive stylistics in analysing psychological states but differ in genre and narrative scope. Fozilovna's analysis of Chekhov's *Sleepy* and Mansfield's *The Child Who Was Tired* demonstrates how mind style can deepen literary interpretation. Similarly, Suleiman et al. (2023) employed cognitive stylistics to explore Kambili's mental state in *Purple Hibiscus*, illustrating how stylistic features like syntactic patterns and figurative language shape a protagonist's psychological perspective. Both studies contribute to the wider field of cognitive stylistics, but their focus on modern literary works contrasts with the present study's investigation of biblical parables.

Jaafar's (2020) study on schema and text world theories in literary texts demonstrated how these cognitive frameworks can help readers connect textual elements with background knowledge, enhancing the interpretive process. This study is highly relevant to the current research, as it shares the same theoretical frameworks and focus on how readers construct mental models. However, while Jaafar's study examines a variety of literary texts, the present study narrows its focus to the parable of the Wicked Husbandman, providing a more specific investigation into how cognitive stylistic features shape mind styles in religious texts.

Sirinarang and Wijitsopon (2021) applied TWT and Schema Theory to analyse Viktor Frankl's memoir *Man's Search for Meaning*, concentrating on how linguistic features construct the narrator's mind style. Their study highlights the potential of cognitive stylistics to reveal the psychological and philosophical layers of texts. This work resonates with the current study's use of TWT and Schema Theory to explore mind style, especially in how these theories can expose



the psychological and theological viewpoints embedded in the parable of the Wicked Husbandman.

Other studies, such as those by El-Wahsh (2023), Mueller (2023), and Neary (2023), have examined metaphor and religious discourse, focusing on how metaphor functions within religious texts. While these studies enhance the understanding of religious language, they primarily concentrate on metaphorical structures rather than mind style, which is a key distinction highlighted by the present study. By applying TWT and Schema Theory to the parable of the Wicked Husbandman, this study investigates how linguistic features beyond metaphor—such as deixis, transitivity processes, and relational structures—construct character perspectives and moral worldviews.

In summary, although many studies have applied cognitive stylistics to modern literary works and some have examined religious texts from a cognitive perspective, there remains a gap in applying these theories to mind style in biblical parables (Edem & Aluya, 2023). This research addresses that gap by analysing the parable of the Wicked Husbandman in Luke 20:9-19, illustrating how linguistic features in two Bible translations (NKJV and NIV) create contrasting mind styles and theological interpretations. By utilising TWT and Schema Theory, the current study offers a new contribution to cognitive stylistics and biblical interpretation, emphasising how translation choices shape worldview and moral understanding in religious texts.

## **Methodology**

This study employs a qualitative textual analysis approach, suitable for exploring the cognitive and linguistic features of biblical texts. Unlike quantitative methods that focus on frequency, qualitative analysis allows for close reading to reveal how stylistic choices shape character perspectives and worldviews (Titscher et al., 2000).

The data for this study include the parable of the Wicked Husbandman (Luke 20:9–19) as presented in two English Bible translations: the New King James Version (NKJV) and the New International Version (NIV). The NKJV maintains formal diction and syntactic structures typical of traditional translations, while the NIV uses modern vocabulary and idiom to enhance

accessibility. A comparative analysis of these two methods allows the study to evaluate how translation choices influence the cognitive stylistic construction of mind style.

The analysis employs Text World Theory (Werth, 1999; Gavins, 2007) to identify world-building elements (participants, time, and place) and function-advancing propositions (events and actions), and Schema Theory (Rumelhart, 1980; Stockwell, 2002) to explain how cultural knowledge of vineyards, inheritance, and authority influences interpretation. Attention is given to how the vineyard owner, his servants, and the husbandmen are linguistically depicted, and how translation differences between NKJV and NIV shape these portrayals. By focusing on this single parable, the study demonstrates how cognitive stylistics reveal the linguistic encoding of worldview in sacred texts, and how translation mediates theological and interpretive meaning.

### **Analysis and Findings**

The discourse world in the parable of the wicked Husbandmen in both the NKJV and NIV refers to the societal and religious context in which the parable was presented and interpreted. The parable is set within the temple in Jerusalem during the final week of Jesus's life. The discourse world of this parable in both versions includes the discourse participants involving Jesus, his disciples, and some Pharisees. The parable was spoken by Jesus during the final week of his ministry, shortly after his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, and is a rebuke to the Jewish religious leaders who rejected God's prophets and, ultimately, Jesus himself. The parable was delivered in the temple courts, where Jesus taught the people. It adopts a shared discourse world.

The text world of the parable refers to the fictional setting and narrative within the story itself. This world includes the vineyard owner, the wicked husbandmen (tenants), their actions, the land they cultivate, and the subsequent events that unfold within the framework of the parable. It symbolically represents a spiritual truth that Jesus uses to illustrate an important point. Using the text world theory, both versions' text worlds are shaped by world-building elements and function-advancing propositions. The world-building elements include time (past), location (vineyard), objects (vineyard), and characters (the vineyard owner, the servants, the son of the vineyard owner, and the wicked husbandmen). The function-advancing proposition describes a landowner who plants a vineyard and entrusts it to tenants, sending his servants and son to collect his share of the

harvest. But the husbandmen mistreat and murder them, aiming to inherit the vineyard. When the vineyard owner returns, he kills the husbandmen and grants the vineyard to others.

The parable employs three types of deixis: temporal, spatial, and social. The temporal deixis refers to the past, with words like ‘planted’, ‘leased’, ‘went’, ‘sent’, ‘beat’, and ‘killed’ in Luke chapter 16, verse 9. These verbs establish a timeline of events, helping the reader understand the sequence of the owner’s actions, the husbandmen’s disobedience, and the eventual consequences. Spatial terms such as “vineyard”, “the owner’s house”, and “into the vineyard” define the setting and movement of characters, clarifying the spatial relationships between them and their environment. Lexical items like “lord” and “owner” indicate social hierarchy and power dynamics between the vineyard owner and the husbandmen. The actions of the husbandmen, such as killing the messengers and the owner’s son, also reflect their social roles as servants. The parable uses social deixis to highlight characters’ social status and actions based on their position.

The narrator alludes to events in the text world through material, mental, verbal, and relational processes. For instance, the reader is introduced to the following material verbs: ‘planted’, ‘leased (rented)’, and ‘went’ (Luke 16: 19); ‘sent’, ‘give’, ‘beat’, and ‘sent’ (Luke 16:10); ‘sent’, ‘beat’, ‘treated’, and ‘sent’ (Luke 16:11); ‘sent’, ‘wounded’, and ‘cast’ (Luke 16: 12); ‘do’ (Luke 16: 15); ‘come’, ‘destroy (kill)’, and ‘give’ (Luke 16: 16). These material verbs are attributed to the vineyard owner and the husbandmen. Verbs like ‘beat’, ‘treated’, ‘wounded’, ‘cast’, and ‘kill’ depict the actions of the wicked husbandmen. They illustrate their violent and rebellious behaviour towards the vineyard owner and his messengers. The narrator’s choice of these verbs highlights the husbandmen’s rejection of the vineyard owner’s authority and their disregard for his property and possessions. The repeated use of the verb ‘sent’, as shown in the vineyard owner’s relentless efforts to send his messengers to the husbandmen despite their brutal treatment of them, demonstrates his patience and tolerance. Additionally, the verbs ‘come’ and ‘destroy’ attributed to the vineyard owner portray his judgment over the wicked husbandmen.

Besides the material verbs, mental verbs like ‘respect’ and ‘see’ (Luke 16: 13), along with ‘saw’ and ‘reasoned’ (Luke 16: 14), are featured in the parable and are used to describe the thoughts and intentions of the characters. The verb ‘respect’ exemplifies a mental verb of cognition and is

employed to highlight the inner thoughts of the vineyard owner. Similarly, 'reasoned' is a mental cognition verb attributed to the wicked husbandmen and is used to reveal their mental state as they work together to plot the assassination of the vineyard owner's son. The only verb of perception in the text is 'see', which is attributed to the wicked husbandmen and refers to their recognition of the vineyard owner's son. The parable employs the relational process as exemplified in the expression 'this is the heir' (Luke 16: 14). This relational verb establishes relationships and connections between entities within the discourse. These ties are formed by linking the discourse participant (son) through attributes, values, or phenomena. For example, the relational phrase 'this is' in verse 14 connects the vineyard owner's son to the discourse via attributes and phenomena. Attributes describe the qualities of the son being referred to, while phenomena relate the son to a fact or situation that is observed to exist. Importantly, the characters' speech within the textual world is grounded in factuality, as evidenced by verbal processes such as 'said' (Luke 16:13), 'saying' (Luke 16: 14), and 'said' (Luke 16: 16). These verbal processes serve as vital resources in establishing a dialogic narrative within the text.

The parable of the wicked Husbandmen in the NKJV and NIV does not depict a subworld. A critical assessment of the text world theory applied to this parable in both versions reveals that the authors employ world-building elements and function-advancing propositions to create the text world. Both versions use transitivity processes such as material, mental, verbal, and relational processes to depict events within the textual world. Notably, the choice of verbs representing these transitivity processes varies in some instances. Both versions provide the reader with temporal, spatial, and social deictic information, aiding in understanding the characters' experiences. They also highlight the consequences of the husbandmen's actions, underlining the landowner's just judgment and establishing a new rule. Although both translations convey the same core message, differences in word choices and sentence structures illustrate varied focus and emphasis in each version. In summary, the NKJV and NIV translations of the parable of the Wicked Husbandmen stress the repercussions of disobedience and the importance of obedience to God's authority. However, the NKJV adopts a more formal and direct tone, while the NIV employs modern, accessible language and offers additional context for the parable's message.

## Discussion

The analysis of the parable of the Wicked Husbandman demonstrates how cognitive stylistic features create contrasting mind styles that convey themes of patience, rebellion, and divine justice. Set within the discourse world of Jerusalem's temple courts during the final week of Jesus' ministry, the parable serves as an allegorical rebuke to the Jewish religious leaders who repeatedly rejected divine authority. This practical context aligns with Fowler's (1977, 1996) fundamental concept of mind style as the linguistic expression of a worldview, emphasising how textual features project different mental perspectives.

The world of the parable further demonstrates how language encodes different perspectives. The vineyard owner's repeated sending of servants exemplifies persistence and patience, while his final actions (come and destroy) convey justice and authority. Conversely, the tenants' violent actions (beat, cast out, kill) shape a worldview of rebellion and usurpation. These findings echo Krishnamurthy's (2010) study of *The Poisonwood Bible* and Jaafar's (2019) analysis of Melvin Udall, both of which show how material and lexical choices reveal character perspectives. The present study expands this understanding to biblical discourse, illustrating that similar stylistic markers shape mind styles in sacred texts.

Deictic structures reinforce these mental frameworks. Temporal deixis places the parable in a past context, spatial deixis anchors it in the vineyard schema familiar to first-century audiences, and social deixis (lord, owner) highlights hierarchies of power. This supports Jaafar's (2020) and Sirinarang and Wijitsopon's (2021) findings that Text World Theory and Schema Theory show how cultural and experiential frames guide interpretation. In the parable, schemas of land ownership, inheritance, and authority influence how readers perceive the tenants' rebellion as both socially and theologically transgressive.

Translation choices between NKJV and NIV show how language differences affect interpretation. The NKJV's formal diction emphasises divine authority and serious judgment, while the NIV's simple language stresses immediacy and relational tension. This contrast aligns with the work of Suleiman et al. (2023) and Fozilovna (2020), who demonstrated how stylistic features of suffering protagonists reflect different worldviews. Here, the translations reveal that even minor lexical and syntactic variations influence how readers view the vineyard owner's patience and the tenants'

disobedience.

Finally, although previous cognitive stylistic research on religious texts has often concentrated on metaphor (Kuczok, 2018; El-Wahsh, 2023; Mueller, 2023), the current study bridges a gap by analysing mind style in a biblical parable. Using Text World Theory and Schema Theory, it shows that parables are linguistically rich environments where worldview formation arises from transitivity patterns, deixis, and translation decisions. In summary, this discussion confirms that mind style analysis, previously used on modern fiction and autobiography, can be effectively extended to biblical texts. The parable of the Wicked Husbandman demonstrates how linguistic features convey patience, rebellion, and justice, and how translation influences theological meaning. This contribution not only expands the scope of cognitive stylistics but also provides new tools for biblical interpretation.

## Conclusion

This study used cognitive stylistic frameworks, specifically Text World Theory and Schema Theory, to analyse the parable of the Wicked Husbandman in Luke's Gospel. It examined how linguistic choices shape mental models and influence interpretation. The analysis revealed that the vineyard owner's persistence, patience, and eventual justice are expressed through repeated material processes such as send, give, and destroy, while the tenants' rebellion and violence are shown through actions like beat, cast out, and kill. These contrasting mental models dramatise the theological themes of authority, disobedience, and divine judgment. The study also emphasised the role of deixis in shaping reader engagement. Temporal deixis positions the parable as a sequence of escalating events, spatial deixis grounds the narrative in the familiar schema of the vineyard, and social deixis highlights hierarchies of power. Collectively, these elements provide cognitive cues that frame the parable as an allegory of Israel's rejection of God's messengers and Son.

Comparison of the NKJV and NIV translations reveals how differences in diction and syntax shape interpretation. The formality of the NKJV emphasises solemnity and divine authority, whereas the NIV's accessibility highlights immediacy and human conflict. These findings confirm that translation is not merely a linguistic task but a mediator of theological worldview. Building on

existing scholarship, this study broadens insights from empirical research on mind style in modern fiction (Krishnamurthy, 2010; Jaafar, 2019), schema-based interpretation (Jaafar, 2020; Sirinarang & Wijitsopon, 2021), and characterisation in suffering narratives (Fozilovna, 2020; Suleiman et al., 2023) into the field of biblical texts. While prior research on sacred discourse has often emphasised metaphor (Kuczok, 2018; El-Wahsh, 2023; Mueller, 2023), this study demonstrates that mind style offers an equally valuable perspective for understanding how parables linguistically encode worldview.

In conclusion, the parable of the Wicked Husbandman illustrates how biblical stories are linguistically rich platforms for constructing worldviews. By combining cognitive stylistics with biblical interpretation, the study shows that language is key in shaping spiritual and moral understanding. Future research could extend this analysis to other parables or to non-narrative biblical texts, investigating how translation and stylistic features influence theological meanings across various contexts.

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## Life in the Anthropocene: Re-Thinking Human Identity

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### Abstract

This paper argues that ecological imbalance in the Twenty-First Century has generated a concern about re-thinking human identity vis-à-vis other life forms and elements. Humans have alienated themselves from the environment and other life forms in their race for advancement and progress. The segregation of humans from trees, animals, and nature has resulted in a bio-threat. Thinking beyond human identity implies focusing on decentering the anthropocentric universe, giving way to other life forms, and making human identity more inclusive instead of reducing it to a four-walled, sanitized air-conditioned room. The extreme divide between humans and other life forms has threatened their adaptability, immunity, and survival capacity. Identity cannot be inscribed in one form or body but as an extension of this bodily existence, as a network of interlinked human-animal-plant life and their relationship to the ecosystem. This understanding and realization particularly becomes important for corporate sectors in understanding the nature of humans and their resources. Human beings are not only organisms but also a part of a network and shared existence linked with nature and other beings. The exploitation of resources (natural or human) may appear lucrative at one point, but it eventually leads to drastic consequences, often irreparable, in the long run. Natural calamities in the present millennium draw attention towards the long-established conflict between the human world and the world of other beings. One way to address this gap is by extending the notion of human identity, which is more assimilative and inclusive.

**Keywords:** Autopoietic, Sympoietic, Anthropocentric Process-Product Model, Anthropocene, Capitalocene

### Introduction

The Twenty-First Century started with the coronavirus pandemic and continued to be affected by natural calamities, wars, and global disasters. In light of such ecological imbalance, it is imperative for human beings to re-look, re-visit, and re-define our perception and approach towards our identity. Identity forms an intrinsic part of our existence and survival. It creates a sense of purpose in our lives. Different civilizations vary in their take on identity. Western civilization bases its notion of “bare life” and “a purported opposition between bios and zoē” (Aristotle; Agamben 1995, 2005, 2009; Finlayson, 2010). Eastern civilization has more or less continued to be pantheistic in its approach and spirit. On the one hand, Western Civilization struck the world with its Renaissance, Enlightenment, Industrial, Scientific, and Technological Revolutions, Colonization, and finally culminated in the global-capital-commercial order spreading in the world. On the other hand, Eastern civilization, following its Western colonizer, adhered to the market-economy model. Since the Renaissance, the extreme importance given to human beings created an anthropocentric global order, and this anthropocentrism was based on humans in power. The sense of identity thus formed was based on the “anthropocentric process-product model,” in which the activities and products that were human-centric were produced and promoted. Human Beings derive their identity materially through the body and philosophically through the soul. Likewise, identity is derived from society, culture, and place, as is seen in various disciplines. In sociology, Emile Durkheim points out that humans are basically social beings. Aristotle has seen human beings as political animals. Economics is dominated by the idea of homo economicus, which sees humans as a resource. Anthropology classifies the current species as *homo sapiens sapiens*, meaning “wise, wise human”.

This paper argues that while our focus remains on human beings as the locus, the other life forms (plants, trees, animals, nature) are subjected to ignorance. While human beings are seen as social beings, the sociality of plants and animals is often neglected. Sociality is described essentially as a human quality asserting the superiority of humans. In the thesis submitted to the Master of Environmental Studies in Planning, University of Waterloo, M. Beth L. Dempster contrasts between two types of systems, sympoietic and autopoietic:

Autopoietic (self-producing) systems are autonomous units with self-defined boundaries that tend to be centrally controlled, homeostatic, and predictable. Sympoietic (collectively-

producing) systems do not have self-defined spatial or temporal boundaries. Information and control are distributed among components. The systems are evolutionary and have the potential for surprising change. Since they cannot be identified by boundaries, sympoietic systems must be identified by the self-organizing factors involved in their generation. (v)

## Background

There can be two propositions: Firstly, qualities so far thought of as human are not only human but natural, ubiquitous, and belong to all living beings. Secondly, it is not an independent, individual, and bodily attribute; rather, it is a quality of interaction, inter-dependence, or network that forms the basis of life. Human identity as perceived through continuous proliferation through stratification, classification, differentiation, and hierarchization cannot be inscribed within a system of qualifying and identifying human bodies; it has to be understood as a system of networks between other humans, animals, plants, and elements. This emphasizes the need to define identity vis-à-vis all life forms (including humans, animals, and plants). It is important for thinking, as Donna Haraway (2016) points out, “about rehabilitation (making livable again) and sustainability amidst the porous tissues and open edges of damaged but still ongoing living worlds, like the planet Earth and its denizens in current times being called the Anthropocene” (37).

Theoretically, this can be seen in the context of Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Eco-Technology, and ‘Coronademics.’ Anthropocene is regarded as the geological time in Earth’s history which led to the rise of humans and their influence and control on the climate and conditions of the earth (Lewis & Maslin, 2015; Angus, 2016; Moore, 2016; Figueroa, 2017; Denny, 2017; Fremaux, 2019; Reiss, 2019; DeLoughrey, 2019; Hornborg 2019). It is believed that it started from the invention of the wheel, the invention of fire, knowledge of metallurgy, the Columbian Exchange, Industrial Revolution, Technological and Digital Revolution which enabled humans to rule over earth, controlling its physical and ecological features leading to the irreparable consequences of climate change, global warming, melting of glaciers, extinction of other species, wiping out of forests, urbanization, depletion of resources, and the Corona-crisis in 2020.

Anthropocene can be seen as a misleading factor, for the real problem lies with capitalism and globalization (Moore, 2015; Moore, 2016; Fremaux, 2019; Lombard, 2019). How humans influence and shape the ecology and environment depends more on our societies than biology.

Different communities have transformed environments differently. So “wealthy urban dwellers can emit ten times or more per person than the rural poor. And Earth’s poorest billion people emit almost no fossil carbon at all” (Ellis, 2018, p. 133-137). Henceforth, we come across the question that not all humans have affected Earth in the same ways. Wealth, capital, money, and resources, and who owned these resources, have played a vital role in bringing out this transition to the capitalocene.

There is a need to develop ecocritical perspectives in the corporations that balance the lopsided approach towards advancement. Ecocriticism means correlating disciplines and developing critical thinking for ecology (Glottfelty, 1996; Grrard, 2004; Slovic, 2015; Haag, 2019). Ecocriticism helps in enhancing our understanding of surroundings, atmosphere, environment, and ecology in a better way. Similarly, technological development needs to be critically correlated to other disciplines (Cooper, 2003; Shaw, 2008). Instead of looking at development only as an accumulation of invention and advancement, technological development has to be analyzed in correlation to personal, social, and ecological practices.

All beings have consciousness. The Indian philosophical thought and Western Transcendental thought emphasize this fact. The human society created classifications, subjects, and disciplines in a hierarchical order with extreme emphasis on the anthropocentric viewpoint. The plant and animal kingdoms were placed at the bottom of the hierarchy in this classification. It is important in Anthropocenic studies to understand how this human and other-life bond is seen because life on earth is based on the balance of this cycle. Ecologically, if there are no plants, there is no life, but reciprocally, if there are no humans and no animals, it means no life. The reason is the O<sub>2</sub>-CO<sub>2</sub> Bond, which forms the basis for Earth’s life.

At one point, humans were marginally struggling against the fate of destruction and the forces of nature. At that point, pantheistic religions emerged so that the sun, earth, fire, water, wind, sky, rivers, mountains, thunder, forests, oceans, trees, and animals became gods. Humans were then helpless to affect these forces, and forms of religions emerged: nature-worship, animism, manism, and polytheism. But then humans gradually progressed, learnt not only adaptation and resistance but also ways to defy these forces. This marked the change from Theocene to Anthropocene. Then, the gods also became anthropomorphic. This transition from worshipping nature to worshipping anthropomorphic gods culminated in the world being controlled and

regulated by humans, the present age. In this age, humans are gods, not nature, plants, animals, or celestial bodies. And, then there are innumerable stories of tyrannical gods in Greek, Roman, and Indian mythology. When humans became gods, they became tyrannical gods. Juxtaposed to an abundant human population, there exists the bare fact of enervated, weak, emaciated, and slender beings living in reduced forests, almost in captivity. Often, the tyrannical gods themselves created reasons for their downfall. Likewise, humans suffered because of their own actions by creating a “damaged planet.” If one recalls the old stories, paintings, or movies in which one sees a strong carnivore facing a group of humans who would run away or fall prey to its might. Today, these other life-forms have come to the same situation in which humans had found themselves at one point of time.

### **Moving Forward**

How to affect and anticipate life in the Anthropocene is a big question. It is important to understand that in the Anthropocene, we stand at a juncture where we need to transition our sense of identity from anthropic to omni-beings. Omni-beings imply that we are part of the lives of other human beings, animals, plants, and birds as much as we are part of ourselves. It was believed that humans have elevated consciousness, so they were seen as the mediators for all kinds of life. It is noted in recent studies on other life-forms that they, too, exhibit elevated consciousness. The human consciousness has always felt this connection with them. It is not so that the earth exists only because of one kind of being. It exists because of the relationship between those beings, which is mutual and not exclusive of one or the other.

There is a need to revise and redefine economic terms like “capital” and “profit.” As humans, we want to improve our output, so we promoted the concept of Human Resource Development. As a result, we kept on exploiting our natural resources, and when there occurred a danger of depletion, we resorted to the conservation of depleted resources. Though there is a focus on Natural Resource Management, the time has come to move a step ahead towards Natural Resource Development. Humans are proponents in the development of natural resources just like other beings. Capital is not only physical or digital currency. Our resources, both human and natural, are capital as well. The better our capital, the better the long-term profit. As Timothy Walker (2012) suggests:

it does not matter which tree species is growing and absorbing carbon so long as a tree is growing. It has been calculated that the value of these ecosystem services is approximately \$33,000,000 million per annum. This is a strange, sterile calculation because if you had \$33,000,000 million in your wallet, where would you go to buy these ecosystem services? (p. 90).

Secondly, it is important for corporates to revise, question, and modify the policy of “use and throw” which has become signature stamp of the Age of Information and has deeply transformed the attitude of the people. This can be tackled by creating durable and sustainable products. This will reduce the burden on resources and help in improving our uses of resources and manufactured products.

“Idea of standard” has to be revoked. The idea of a standard lifestyle has now been limited to a narrow air-conditioned space isolated from the rest of the world. Creating and maintaining a few facilities that appear Eden-like is not sustainable and practical in the long run. It just creates an illusion of luxury by compromising various other aspects like sensitivity and regard for other people, beings, and plants in the surroundings. There is a need to develop a greater eco-social relationship. What has replaced our natural growth and development in recent times is the “culture of fear” (White, 2004); “extinction of experience” (Pyle, 1993); and biophobia. In addition to this, we have also transitioned to the digital age where the screen may provide the image of lush and green forests, beautiful and majestic animals, colourful plants and trees, but at the same time, they are reduced to a screen (Chawla, 1994; Pyle, 2002; White, 2004). As M. C. Harrison explains in the context of ‘narrative empathy,’ the screen “serves as an escape from the real-life ethical demands, allowing readers to congratulate themselves for feeling with fictional characters while simultaneously doing nothing for people in need” (Harrison 259). The same may happen in the case of virtual experience, which may result in digital empathy or identification, but cause nothing substantial in our real-life world. Therefore, it becomes important for humans to remain in contact with the real world and the natural environment.

In the age of globalization, the market becomes a global force while governments remain the national force, so what governments fail to do, perhaps markets can. The need of hours is



eco-economy where ecology remains the center. Likewise, green technologies can be used and workplaces can be maintained by ecosystems rather than technology alone, transforming them into an "eco-workplace" (Billatos, 1997; Sobha, 2008; Arceivala, 2014; Singh & Kumar, 2017). Markets can be based on natural and ecological models, enhancing the natural surroundings for the market. There is a need to promote the idea of Eco-Capital, where capital is not seen in isolation merely as an object of investment, but also how its investment will affect the other capitals related to the environment. Then we can advance towards Eco-Metropolitanism, building Ecological Metropolises, rather than merely the jungles of bricks and concrete, reducing the landscape to an urban desert.

In one of the essays, feminist scholar Virginia Woolf (2001) said women should have a room of one's own. As we shifted from a joint family to a nuclear family, the formula was applied not only to one's room but to everything one should possess. The market promoted this idea of having everything for oneself: a room of our own, a car of our own, a flat, a laptop, a mobile, a bed, AC, a cabin, a cupboard, and whatnot. And in this wild goose chase, everyone drifted away from the basics. Strikingly, Ruskin Bond struck the idea to have "a tree of our own," as he says: "But now, alas, even the hallowed groves are disappearing, making way for the demands of an ever-increasing population. A pity, because every human needs a tree of his own. Even if you do not worship the tree-spirit, you can love the tree" (Bond, 2015, p. 103). Likewise, spaces can be developed in our surroundings for birds and other creatures. Some spaces can be left for planting trees. This will enable us to keep our omni-identity in contrast to the isolated, anthropocentric, and narrow identity of the luxury and virtual world we have created around us.

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## Folk, Myths, and Resistance: A Feminist and Queer Retelling in Ruskin Bond's Narratives

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### *Abstract*

Ruskin Bond, one of India's most celebrated writers, is often recognized for his evocative narratives rooted in nature, memory, and personal relationships. While Bond's work is not typically associated with the explicit retelling of myths, his exploration of cultural folklore and mythological themes reveals a subtle engagement with the ways gender, identity, and power dynamics are constructed within these stories. This paper investigates how Bond's stories re-imagine traditional myths through a feminist and queer lens, particularly in his engagement with themes of resistance, marginalized voices, and fluid identities. By analyzing works such as *The Room on the Roof*, *The Blue Umbrella*, and select short stories, this paper explores how Bond's re-configurations of myths reflect the intersections of gender, sexuality, and power, offering a nuanced critique of traditional mythic narratives.

**Keywords:** Feminist Re-imagination, Queer Theory, Gender and Identity, Mythical Retellings, Fluid Sexualities, Colonialism and Gender

### **Introduction**

Myths have long been a cornerstone of cultural narratives, shaping not only collective memory but also the social and political structures of societies. These traditional stories, often involving gods, heroes, and supernatural forces, have been instrumental in reinforcing established gender roles, expectations, and norms. In many traditional mythologies, women have historically been relegated

to passive, secondary roles, while men dominate the mythic landscapes as powerful heroes, gods, or rulers. In contrast, feminist and queer reinterpretations of these myths provide a counterpoint, challenging patriarchal and hetero-normative conventions, and offering alternative depictions of power, agency, and identity.

The retelling of myths and folklore through feminist and queer perspectives has emerged as a significant literary movement, with authors such as Jeanette Winterson, Madeline Miller, and others offering nuanced re imaginings of traditional stories. However, lesser-known authors like Ruskin Bond have also contributed to this evolving narrative. Bond, primarily known for his evocative portrayals of life in the Indian Himalayas, has quietly engaged with themes of gender, identity, and resistance, subtly disrupting the traditional gender roles embedded in mythological and folkloric traditions.

While his works are often categorized as introspective, personal reflections, many of Bond's stories engage with cultural narratives that subtly question societal norms, particularly those related to gender and sexuality. His re-imagining of folk tales and mythic traditions provides a space for exploring marginalized identities and subversive acts of resistance. This paper aims to explore how Ruskin Bond's writings, while not overtly feminist or queer, engage with these themes, offering a subtle yet significant critique of traditional myths and social constructs.

### **Theoretical Framework: Feminist and Queer Readings of Myths**

To understand the feminist and queer dimensions of Bond's works, it is essential to first explore the theoretical frameworks that underlie these readings. Feminist theory, particularly as articulated by thinkers like Judith Butler and Simone de Beauvoir, interrogates the ways in which gender roles are constructed and reinforced through narratives.

*"There is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender; that identity is performatively constituted by the very 'expressions' that are said to be its results."(Butler, 1990)*

Myths, as deeply ingrained cultural stories, often serve as instruments for perpetuating traditional gender norms, with women depicted as passive figures, often in need of rescue or protection. A feminist reading of myths challenges this passive positioning, seeking to re-frame women as active agents with their own desires, powers, and subjectivities. Haraway's quote mentioned below emphasizes the power of re-imagining the past, much like Bond does with the mythic and folkloric elements in his work. *We are all chimeras, the past and the future are grafted onto us, and we are the hope and the uncertainty of our time.*" (Haraway, 1991)

Queer theory, in turn, deconstructs the binary understanding of gender and sexuality, offering a more fluid and inclusive interpretation of identity. In queer readings of myths, characters and relationships are freed from hetero-normative constraints, allowing for the exploration of non-binary gender identities, same-sex relationships, and a broader spectrum of sexual and emotional expressions. Queer theory encourages an open-ended approach to identity, rejecting fixed categories and exploring the complexities of desire, attraction, and connection. *A person's desire for a person of the same sex, in other words, exists in a field of tension and overlap with all kinds of other desires".* (Sedgwick, 1990)

In the case of Ruskin Bond's work, these frameworks offer a lens through which to examine his engagement with mythic structures. Though Bond's stories do not always present explicit feminist or queer messages, his nuanced portrayals of characters, particularly those on the margins of society, challenge traditional gender roles and offer possibilities for more inclusive understandings of identity and power.

## **1. Bond's Re-imagination of Myth: Case Studies**

### **The Room on the Roof (1956): The Hero's Journey and Subversion of Colonial and Gendered Norms**

At first glance, *The Room on the Roof* might not seem like a work engaged with mythic traditions, yet the novel's portrayal of Rusty, a young orphaned English boy navigating life in colonial India, mirrors many aspects of the hero's journey—an archetypal mythic structure. Rusty's journey in *The Room on the Roof* follows Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey model, as he progresses from

being an isolated, constrained boy to an independent, self-aware individual. He decides to leave the oppressive environment of his guardian's house, which reflects the "call to adventure" in the Hero's Journey. "Rusty felt a strange restlessness, a yearning for the unknown, as if he had to leave the safety of his old life and seek something new." (Bond 12)

Rusty's journey of self-realization and personal liberation offers a subversion of traditional narratives of masculinity and colonial superiority. His quest for identity and belonging involves his defiance of both colonialism and the gendered norms associated with his British upbringing. His refusal to conform to expectations regarding his identity—both colonial and gendered—mirrors the ways in which mythic heroes often break away from oppressive systems to embark on a personal journey of self-discovery. Rusty's story highlights his resistance to the rigidity of colonial structures and social expectations, making his journey a feminist and queer re-imagining of mythic narratives. Rusty's search for belonging can be seen as a metaphorical return to a more authentic, unencumbered self, freed from the constraints of colonial and gendered oppression. By the end of the novel, Rusty has achieved a greater understanding of himself, returning with new insights and personal growth.

"He had changed, and he knew it. His journey had taken him away from  
the constraints of his old life, but it had also brought him closer  
to understanding who he really was." (Bond 119)

## **2. The Blue Umbrella (1980): Feminine Agency and the Subversion of Power Dynamics**

In *The Blue Umbrella*, Bond reimagines traditional gender and power dynamics through the story of Binya, a young girl who becomes the possessor of a beautiful blue umbrella that becomes the object of desire for an older man, Ram Bharosa. At first glance, Binya might appear to be a traditional heroine in a rural setting—an innocent girl whose life is turned upside down by her prized possession. However, her agency in the face of adversity repositions her as a feminist figure challenging patriarchal control. She does not submit to Ram Bharosa's wishes but instead displays

resilience and moral strength. She represents an active form of resistance that upends traditional notions of femininity and passivity.

“She did not cry, nor did she plead. Binya knew that if she gave in,  
the umbrella would lose its charm for her. It was not about the  
umbrella anymore, it was about her pride.” (Bond 34)

Binya’s defiance of Ram Bharosa’s desires represents a subversive act of resistance. She does not rely on physical strength to reclaim her umbrella, but instead on her moral compass and resilience, which allows her to resist the societal norms that would typically place her in a subordinate position. In this retelling, Bond challenges the traditional myth of the "hero’s journey" by providing a feminist interpretation of power. Binya’s reclaiming of the umbrella, despite being a simple object, becomes a metaphor for resistance to male domination and a rejection of patriarchal values. Her journey demonstrates how women, even in traditional narratives, can be reimagined as active agents rather than passive subjects. The umbrella is more than just a prized possession for Binya; it becomes a symbol of her resistance to the control that Ram Bharosa seeks to exert over her. Binya’s act of reclaiming it reflects a rejection of patriarchal power structures. “What Ram Bharosa had taken for power—his wealth, his age, and his position—proved useless in the end. It was the strength of a child’s belief in right and wrong that triumphed.” (Bond 52)

Binya’s journey, which might initially seem like a conventional story of loss and recovery, is instead a reworking of traditional gender and power narratives. Through her actions, she redefines the role of women in rural, patriarchal settings, showing that women can resist and reclaim agency.

“In the end, it was not the older man’s power or charm, but the simple,  
unyielding strength of a girl’s conviction that returned the umbrella to its  
rightful owner.” (Bond 56)

### 3. Selected Short Stories: Queering Desire and Challenging Masculinity



In many of Bond's short stories, the themes of marginalized identities and fluid relationships take center stage. Two such stories, *The Man Who Would Be King* and *The Night Train at Deoli*, explore non-traditional notions of power, masculinity, and desire.

*The Man Who Would Be King* is a story about a man who seeks to dominate and control, but who ultimately faces vulnerability and isolation. The narrative subverts traditional notions of masculinity by illustrating how even those who seek to uphold patriarchal ideals are susceptible to the forces of nature and fate. The protagonist's desire for power is ultimately destabilized, suggesting a critique of hegemonic masculinity and the fragile nature of male authority. His quest for power ultimately fails, and his vulnerability is exposed, suggesting that traditional masculine ideals of strength and dominance are fragile and often undermined by fate.

"The man who sought to conquer all was brought low by forces beyond his control—his power was as brittle as the walls of the kingdom he sought to rule." (Kipling 34)

In this novel Bond critiques hegemonic masculinity by presenting a protagonist who strives for power and dominance but ultimately faces vulnerability and defeat. The story's treatment of masculinity suggests that even those who uphold patriarchal ideals are susceptible to the forces of nature and fate. The protagonist's desire to dominate ultimately proves to be fragile. This reveals the instability of masculine authority, as he is unable to control his fate and is defeated by external forces.

"He had planned for everything, but life has a way of bringing down the mightiest of men. His grand plans crumbled like the crumbling walls of a castle, and all his strength seemed futile against the forces that swept him away." (Kipling 34)

In *The Night Train at Deoli*, the narrator's unspoken longing for a woman and their fleeting encounter challenges traditional heteronormative expectations of romance and desire. The story's exploration of love as transient, unconsummated, and fleeting can be interpreted as a queer exploration of desire. The narrator's desire is internalized and never acted upon, emphasizing how longing can exist without the need for conventional physical or romantic resolution.

"There was a certain sadness in my heart as I watched her leave, for I knew that the connection we had was a fleeting one, a brief moment between strangers, unspoken and unfulfilled, yet unforgettable." (Bond 12)

The narrator's affection remains unspoken and unfulfilled, which challenges normative ideas of romance and highlights the fluid nature of desire, disconnected from conventional heterosexual norms.

"There was something unspoken between us, a longing that neither of us could name, and though we never touched, I knew that the brief meeting on the train would stay with me, like a secret never to be revealed." (Bond 15)

The brief interaction and lack of traditional romantic fulfillment highlight the queering of desire, where longing itself becomes the focus, rather than the ultimate consummation or completion of the relationship.

"Our exchange was brief, a glance, a passing smile, and then she was gone, but the longing remained—a longing that didn't fit neatly into the box of love or desire as society understood it." (Bond 14)

## Conclusion

Ruskin Bond's works, while not overtly feminist or queer in the traditional sense, offer a rich space for reinterpreting mythological and folkloric traditions. His characters—often marginalized, defiant, and complex—engage with themes of resistance, identity, and power in ways that challenge traditional gender and sexual norms. By subtly re-imagining mythic structures and folk traditions, Bond provides a critique of the hegemonic ideologies that shape social roles, inviting readers to reconsider the possibilities for gender and sexual expression.

In examining the ways in which Bond's stories engage with mythological tropes, it becomes clear that his work provides a nuanced commentary on the complexities of identity, power, and belonging. Whether through Rusty's defiance of colonial and gendered expectations, Binya's act

of resistance against patriarchy, or the fluidity of desire in his short stories, Bond's writing opens up space for a feminist and queer re-imagining of the world, one in which the rigid boundaries of identity are constantly being challenged and rewritten. Through these re-imaginings, Bond offers an important contribution to the ongoing dialogue around gender, sexuality, and power in contemporary literature. By subverting traditional gender roles, and offering alternative paths of resistance, Bond invites readers to rethink not only the folklore and myths they have inherited but also the social constructs they navigate today. Through his lens, Bond presents a refreshing narrative that seeks not just to entertain but also to question, challenge, and offer new possibilities for the way we think about power, love, and identity.

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## Semantic Feature Production in Tamil-Speaking Young Adults vs. Geriatrics - A Comparative Study

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### Abstract

Semantics is the part of linguistics that is concerned with meaning. Semantic features are theoretical units of meaning-holding components which are used for representing word meaning. Children typically have productive vocabularies of 50 words or more by 18 months of age, and a significant increase in naming can be expected as new words are acquired at a rapid rate. During this time, children begin to seek out names for things and to draw attention to interesting objects and events by naming them. This period is known as the "naming explosion" or "vocabulary spurt" (Bates,1991). Many developmentalists believe it represents significant advancements in children's semantic and conceptual knowledge (Bloom,1973). Although the spurt is a period of rapid cognitive and linguistic development, it is also a period of increased error. This study aims to compare the Semantic Feature Production in Young and Older Tamil-Speaking Adults which in turn could reflect the Cognitive Linguistic Changes across age range.

**Keywords:** semantics, naming explosions, vocabulary spurt, conceptual knowledge, linguistic

development

## **Introduction**

Several studies have documented instances of children making spontaneous naming errors during their rapid word acquisition period (Anglin,1986). These errors appear to be caused by an overextension of a known word to a novel exemplar that shares some salient attribute, especially when the child has never heard the object named before (Huttenlocher & Smiley,1987). Children's naming errors are caused by a particular vulnerability of newly acquired words as they compete with more items in a rapidly expanding lexicon. That is, because of the absolute low levels of activation strength of lexical items that must occur as children learn their first words, errors may occur during the period of accelerated vocabulary growth. However, as children use those words repeatedly in production, they may become stronger and more resistant to interference. These naming errors, like those reported by Elbers (1985), did not appear to be simple overextensions, but occurred with a high frequency (nearly 30% of all naming in one study; Gershkoff-Stowe & Smith, 1997) at a time when children were learning many new words and beginning to produce those words with greater frequency and in closer temporal proximity. As a result, naming difficulties in children can be attributed to deviations observed at any stage of word development.

In most mature speech production models, accessing a word in the lexicon involves the activation and competition of multiple candidates; the stronger the activation of a word, the greater the probability of its selection. Additionally, strong words are more likely to withstand interference than weak words. These findings support the theory that the rise and fall of children's errors reflect changes in the activation strength of individual words as they are retrieved for production. However, there are not many models or hypotheses available to explain adult naming abilities and vocabulary growth. As a result, they are studied using Semantic Feature Activation tasks.

## **Literature Review**

The brain is a complex neuronal structure, and several intrinsic connections are activated during semantic feature production tasks. Increased accuracy has been associated with greater activation in the occipito-temporal and temporo-parietal regions during category judgments to visually presented words (Shaywitz,2002) and in the middle and inferior temporal gyri during association judgments to visual or auditory words (Blumenfeld et al., in press). Improvement in accuracy from semantic training has also resulted in increased activation in the left middle

temporal gyrus, particularly in high skill participants (Sandak,2004), which is attributed to both a larger number of lexical entries and stronger connections between these entries (McGregor and Appel, 2002). Enhancing activation in the lateral temporal region. There has also been evidence of developmental increases in activation in the inferior frontal gyrus during silent verb generation to auditorily presented concrete nouns, verbal semantic fluency to auditorily presented categories, and category judgments to visually presented words (Holland et al., 2006).

Roberto A. Ferreria (2015) investigated the neural correlates of semantic richness and the results revealed the most consistent effects of semantic richness were found in the left angular gyrus (AG) and middle temporal gyrus (MTG), where activation was higher for semantically rich words than poor words. The pattern was also seen in the bilateral pre-cuneus and the posterior cingulate gyrus. Age was linked to higher activation in the left middle temporal gyrus (BA 21) and the inferior parietal lobule (BA 40), implying that older children have more elaborated semantic representations and more complete semantic integration processes. Age decline was correlated with right superior temporal gyrus activation (BA 22), and accuracy decline was correlated with right middle temporal gyrus activation (BA 21), suggesting that ancillary systems in the right hemisphere are engaged for younger and lower-skilled children.

Semantic Feature Association (SFA) is an evidence-based practise that works with the goal of improving Semantic Feature Retrieval using the common lexical categories that one is exposed to. SFA uses a feature analysis chart, which includes multiple semantic categories, to help direct this process. “Persistent and systematic practice in producing semantic features in this way enables individuals to achieve more systematic word retrieval without extensive use of compensatory strategies.” (Boyle, 2010). This method has shown to improve word-finding abilities and coherence of the connected discourse produced in individuals diagnosed with mild to moderate expressive aphasia Mary Boyle (2004), Alzheimer’s disease Flangan (2016) and children with Learning Disability (Candace S Bos), Autism Spectrum Disorder (Ulrika Lofkvist, 2016) by stimulating the identification of semantic features of the target concept.

Therefore, the Production and the development of Semantic feature association is influenced by several factors that include the, age, gender, language Adel Z AlShaikhi (2011) and culture Cameron (1992). and concreteness and abstractness Cynthia S Q. Siew (2020) of the word that is presented. Katherine (2012) documented the Semantic feature distinctiveness and

frequency, which revealed that younger adults had faster response time and older adults had better concept retrieval. David P Winson (2008) studied the semantic feature production norms for a large set of objects and events and the results revealed that the subjects were able to produce features that were related to the motoric and visual aspects of the words that were presented.

Linguistic proficiency could be determined by the degree to which semantic networks are densely organised. However, several studies have been conducted to create a normative data base for the various nouns and verbs found in each of the languages under consideration. Jorge Vivas developed Semantic Feature Production Norms in Spanish (2016). Semantic feature production norms provide many quantitative measures of various feature and concept variables, which are required to resolve some debates about the nature of normal and pathological semantic memory organisation. Mc Rae proposed Semantic Feature Norms for a wide range of Living and Non-living Things (2005). This study was conducted in English, for basic-level concepts and all of the features were classified into one of nine knowledge types: three for visual information (visual-color, visual-parts and surface properties, and visual-motion), four for other primary sensory processing channels (smell, sound, tactile, and taste), one for functional/motor information about how people interact with objects (function), and one (encyclopaedic).

Semantic Feature Association has been shown to be an evidence-based practise that aids in naming in a variety of disorder. This technique has been shown to improve discourse skills as well. Therefore, improving the semantic feature association for various classes of words will improve both the cohesiveness and efficacy of the conversation in each language. Normative data base should be established in each language extensively to understand better about the Semantic Feature Activation and Production. However, there is a dearth of such studies in Indian languages hence this study could be considered as a preliminary base for developing such Normative data in Indian Language.

### **Aim**

To compare the Semantic Feature Production in Young and Older Tamil-Speaking Adults which in turn could reflect the Cognitive Linguistic Changes across age range.

### **Method and Participants**

The study was approved by the Institutions Ethical committee. The study aimed to obtain the semantic feature production in Tamil. Initially, five semantic categories with 15 words each in

Tamil were chosen and given for validation. The categories and the words under them were determined based on the review of literature. The validation was performed by 10 Speech Language Pathologist who had at least work experience of 4 years and above in the field of Neuro-communication disorders. Google forms were circulated among the Speech Language Pathologist and the responses were collected and consolidated. A list of 30 words was prepared based on the consolidated results which consisted of two concrete categories (Food & drinks, Small house hold items) and one abstract category of (action words and emotion).

The study included two group of participants. Group A included young adults (19-35 years) and Group B included Geriatrics (55-75 years) who are fluent in Tamil and had normal or corrected hearing and vision. Participants with neurodegenerative conditions were excluded. The study was carried out in 3 phases. In Phase I, informed consent was obtained from the participants included and MMSE was administered to rule out underlying cognitive impairment. The participants who obtain a score of 25-30 indicated normal day to day functioning however, mild defects might be present were included in the study. Individuals with a score less than 25 are excluded from the study.

In Phase II, black and white line drawing of 10 words from 3 distinct semantic categories (Food and drinks, common objects and actions words) were presented through Auditory- visual modality via Microsoft-power point for duration of 30 seconds. The participants were given a common instruction to verbally list down all the features in Tamil that were related to the word that was projected as single words. All the participants were given with 3 practice items to familiarise with the procedure. The responses were recorded through phone recorder which was subjected to further analysis.

In Phase III, the responses that were recorded was segregated based on the visual, functional, proprioceptive and motoric features of the word that was presented. Code mixed (other language responses) and omitted responses (repetition of the same answers, phrasal responses) were documented. The data was subjected to appropriate statistical analysis.

## **Results and Discussion**

The current study aimed at comparing the semantic feature production between neurotypical Young Adults and Geriatric population. Group A included Young Adults (N=30) of the age range 18-35 years with a mean of 25.2 years and Group B consisted of Geriatrics (N=30)



of the age range 55-75 years with the mean of 66.4 years. All the participants were presented with 30 words from three distinct semantic categories of food and drinks, common objects, and action words. Each stimulus was presented for a duration of 30 seconds and the responses were recorded and subjected to analysis. The time to initiate the response was noted. The semantic features that were produced were categorized as visual, motoric, functional, and proprioceptive features. The number of omitted responses and number of code-mixed words were analysed and compared between the two groups. Descriptive Statistical analysis was performed using SPSS version 21. Independent T test was used to compare the mean differences between the Young Adults and Geriatrics on the Semantic Features that were produced, Average Response Onset Time, Code Mixing and Omitted Responses. Mann Whitney U test was performed to compare the differences that were present between the Male and the Female participants included within the groups that were considered for the study.

**A. 1. Documentation and comparison of Semantic feature production between Young Adults and Geriatrics for the category of Food and drinks, Common objects, and Action words.**

On comparing the semantic feature production between Young adults and Geriatrics, statistically significant difference ( $p < 0.05$ ) between the groups in the production of Function and Proprioceptive features for the category of food and drinks, statistically significant difference ( $p < 0.05$ ) between the groups in the production of visual and Proprioceptive features for the category of common objects and statistically significant difference ( $p < 0.05$ ) between the groups in the production of motoric, functional and proprioceptive features for the category of action words (Table 1.1). Quantitatively the Young Adults could produce a greater number of features within the given time frame compared to Geriatrics. However, this subjective difference that is obtained while comparing the feature production under each category chosen might be attributed to the ability to associate a given word to multiple concepts, the exposure to different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, ability to recall, familiarization of the functionalities, concrete representation of the objects in our brains or the lack of formation concrete imagery at the level of brain.

A Study done by Kave et al., 2014 on comparing the vocabulary and the word retrieval abilities in Young Adults and older adults which revealed that young adults had better word retrieval

abilities and older adults had a higher vocabulary index. However, the results obtained in this partially supports the results of this study in terms of better word retrieval abilities in young adults which correlates with the results obtained in this study.

*Table 1.1- Comparison of Semantic feature production between Young Adults and Geriatrics across the categories of Food and drinks (1), Common objects (2) and Action words (3)*

		<b>t-test for Equality of Means</b>						
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
							Lower	Upper
<b>VISUAL-1</b>	Equal variances assumed	-0.18	58.00	0.85	-0.10	0.54	-1.19	0.99
	Equal variances not assumed	-0.18	57.52	0.85	-0.10	0.54	-1.19	0.99
<b>MOTOR-1</b>	Equal variances assumed	-1.70	58.00	0.09	-0.57	0.33	-1.23	0.10
	Equal variances not assumed	-1.70	57.99	0.09	-0.57	0.33	-1.23	0.10
<b>FUNCTIONAL-1</b>	Equal variances assumed	2.53	58.00	<b>0.01</b>	0.87	0.34	0.18	1.55
	Equal variances not assumed	2.53	57.61	<b>0.01</b>	0.87	0.34	0.18	1.55
<b>PROPRIOCEPTIVE-1</b>	Equal variances	15.14	58.00	<b>0.00</b>	10.27	0.68	8.91	11.62

	assumed							
	Equal	15.14	37.96	<b>0.00</b>	10.27	0.68	8.89	11.64
	variances not assumed							
	Equal	29.51	44.37	<b>0.00</b>	7.30	0.25	6.80	7.80
	variances not assumed							
t-test for Equality of Means								
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
							Lower	Upper
<b>VISUAL-2</b>	Equal	5.09	58.00	<b>0.00</b>	2.87	0.56	1.74	3.99
	variances assumed							
	Equal	5.09	47.91	<b>0.00</b>	2.87	0.56	1.73	4.00
	variances not assumed							
<b>MOTOR-2</b>	Equal	-0.41	58.00	0.69	-0.07	0.16	-0.40	0.26
	variances assumed							
	Equal	-0.41	57.93	0.69	-0.07	0.16	-0.40	0.26
	variances not assumed							
<b>FUNCTIONAL-2</b>	Equal	0.60	58.00	0.55	0.37	0.61	-0.86	1.60
	variances assumed							
	Equal	0.60	54.21	0.55	0.37	0.61	-0.87	1.60

	variances not assumed							
<b>PROPRIOCEPTIVE- 2</b>	Equal	2.60	58.00	<b>0.01</b>	2.00	0.77	0.46	3.54
	variances assumed							
	Equal	2.60	50.95	<b>0.01</b>	2.00	0.77	0.45	3.55
	variances -not assumed							

		t-test for Equality of Means						
		t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
							Lower	Upper
<b>VISUAL-3</b>	Equal	-0.52	58.00	0.61	-0.07	0.13	-0.32	0.19
	variances assumed							
	Equal	-0.52	57.95	0.61	-0.07	0.13	-0.32	0.19
	variances not assumed							
<b>MOTOR-3</b>	Equal	1.98	58.00	<b>0.05</b>	0.50	0.25	0.00	1.00
	variances assumed							
	Equal	1.98	57.77	<b>0.05</b>	0.50	0.25	0.00	1.00
	variances not assumed							

<b>FUNCTIONAL-3</b>	Equal	2.45	58.00	<b>0.02</b>	1.07	0.44	0.20	1.94
	variances							
	assumed							
	Equal	2.45	57.92	<b>0.02</b>	1.07	0.44	0.20	1.94
<b>PROPRIOCEPTIVE-3</b>	variances							
	not							
	assumed							
	Equal	7.58	58.00	<b>0.00</b>	8.07	1.06	5.94	10.20
<b>3</b>	variances							
	assumed							
	Equal	7.58	51.98	<b>0.00</b>	8.07	1.06	5.93	10.20
	variances							
	not							
	assumed							

## A.2. Comparison of Average Response Onset time for the three categories included between Young Adults and Geriatrics.

Average Response Onset time is the time taken to initiate the response after the stimulus is presented. On comparing the Response onset time between the groups, the results revealed that there was a statistically significant difference ( $p < 0.05$ ) that was obtained for all the categories included in the study (Table 1.2). This quicker initiation of responses is an indication that the younger adults have better comprehension of the instructions and diverse production of semantic features is facilitated. Even though in Geriatrics the feature elicitation is seen they exhibit a difficulty to initiate a quicker response.

Similar results that were obtained in this study, Gehman et al., 2021 investigated the role of processing speed, cognitive control, and word retrieval in aging and aphasia and concluded that aging and aphasia lead to slower processing speed but did not affect cognitive control. The results obtained in this study supports the results obtained in our study to agree to the fact that older adults have a slower processing time when compared to younger adults with or without the role of cognition.

*Table 1.2- Comparison of mean scores for Average Response Onset time between the Young Adults and Geriatrics for all the categories.*

		<b>t-test for Equality of Means</b>						
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
							Lower	Upper
<b>AVGROT-1</b>	Equal variances assumed	-30.43	58.00	<b>0.00</b>	-5.12	0.17	-5.46	-4.79
	Equal variances not assumed	-30.43	33.85	<b>0.00</b>	-5.12	0.17	-5.47	-4.78
<b>AVGROT-2</b>	Equal variances assumed	-30.26	58.00	<b>0.00</b>	-5.13	0.17	-5.47	-4.79
	Equal variances not assumed	-30.26	35.26	<b>0.00</b>	-5.13	0.17	-5.48	-4.79
<b>AVGROT-3</b>	Equal variances assumed	-29.83	58.00	<b>0.00</b>	-5.13	0.17	-5.47	-4.79
	Equal variances not assumed	-29.83	36.47	<b>0.00</b>	-5.13	0.17	-5.48	-4.78

### A.3 Comparison of Code-mixed responses for the three categories included between Young Adults and Geriatrics

All the participants were given a uniform instruction to recall and produce features in Tamil. Responses that were obtained other than the specified language were documented and analyzed as code mixed responses. On comparing code mixed responses between the groups, the results revealed that there was a statistically significant difference ( $p < 0.05$ ) that was obtained for all the categories included in the study (Table 1.3). On observation the code mixing was predominantly observed in English Language and was perceived to be more in Young Adult group when compared to the Geriatric group. This was attributed due to the life style habitation and societal interactions that makes Young Adults retrieve more appropriate features in English when compared to Tamil.

According to Ivy Hypothesis proposed by Schlyter et al., 2004 it stated that, the code mixing occurs as the interaction meant to be in the weaker language. This might be attributed to the exposure in the society where there is a predominant use of one language thereby increasing the competence in that language which is facilitating the survival resulting in significant code-mixing.

*Table 1.3 Comparison of mean scores that are obtained for Code Mixed Responses amongst the Young Adults and Geriatrics for the all the categories.*

		t-test for Equality of Means						
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
							Lower	Upper
<b>CODEMIX-1</b>	Equal variances assumed	7.31	58.00	<b>0.00</b>	8.63	1.18	6.27	11.00

	Equal variances not assumed	7.31	55.16	<b>0.00</b>	8.63	1.18	6.27	11.00
<b>CODEMIX-2</b>	Equal variances assumed	6.00	58.00	<b>0.00</b>	6.97	1.16	4.64	9.29
	Equal variances not assumed	6.00	56.74	<b>0.00</b>	6.97	1.16	4.64	9.29
<b>CODEMIX-3</b>	Equal variances assumed	10.73	58.00	<b>0.00</b>	16.63	1.55	13.53	19.74
	Equal variances not assumed	10.73	53.38	<b>0.00</b>	16.63	1.55	13.52	19.74

#### **A.4 Comparison of Omitted responses for the three categories included between Young Adults and Geriatrics.**

The participants were instructed to produce the semantic features that were related to the pictures that were presented. However, not all the responses that were produced by the participants were taken into consideration. Multiple repetition of the same responses either using the same words or synonyms of the words and phrasal responses were omitted and documented separately and subjected to analysis.

On comparing the omitted responses between the groups, the results revealed that there is statistically significant difference ( $p < 0.05$ ) that was obtained for all the categories included in the study (Table 1.4). On observation there was increase in the omitted responses seen at the Geriatric group when compared to the young adults According to Haas A 1979, it was found that male and female way of expression differs with respect to its form, subject, content and usage. This is the possible reason why there were increased number of omitted responses that was observed in the female participants included in the group when compared to males.



*Table 1.4 Comparison of mean scores that are obtained for depicting the Omitted responses in the Young Adults and Geriatrics for the all the categories.*

		<b>t-test for Equality of Means</b>						
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
							Lower	Upper
<b>OR-1</b>	Equal variances assumed	-16.62	58.00	<b>0.00</b>	-14.37	0.86	-16.10	-12.64
	Equal variances not assumed	-16.62	33.51	<b>0.00</b>	-14.37	0.86	-16.12	-12.61
<b>OR-2</b>	Equal variances assumed	-26.25	58.00	<b>0.00</b>	-18.87	0.72	-20.31	-17.43
	Equal variances not assumed	-26.25	29.00	<b>0.00</b>	-18.87	0.72	-20.34	-17.40
<b>OR-3</b>	Equal variances assumed	-14.61	58.00	<b>0.00</b>	-17.30	1.18	-19.67	-14.93
	Equal variances not assumed	-14.61	29.00	<b>0.00</b>	-17.30	1.18	-19.72	-14.88

**B. Comparison of the Semantic Feature Production, Average Response Onset time, Code mixed responses and Omitted Responses for all the three categories between Male and Female participants of Young adults (Group A).**

On comparing the responses obtained from the male and female participants in the Young Adult group, no statistically significant difference ( $p>0.05$ ) was obtained for response onset time, code mixed responses and the omitted responses for the categories Food and Drinks and Action words included in the study. However, statistically significant difference ( $p<0.05$ ) was obtained in the feature production of the common objects. (Table 2.1) Supportive evidence could be obtained from the study done by Erminio Capitani(1999) to account that Gender affects word retrieval abilities in certain semantic fluency task. The semantic categories considered were: animals, fruits, tools and vehicles. The influence of age and education was common to all the categories considered and seems a general characteristic of the semantic fluency task. Gender had a significant effect only with fruits and tools, but a diverging role: females fared better with fruits and males with tools. On the contrary, the results obtained in our study did not show any differences with respect to the semantic feature production in any of the categories that were chosen. However, this might be due to the familiarity and the categories of the words that were chosen that is least resistant to express the effect of gender in the production.

*Table 2.1 Test statistics for Male and Female Young Adults for the category of Common objects.*

Category		VISUAL	MOTOR	FUNCTIONAL	PROPRIO CEPTIVE
Young adults	Mann-Whitney U	74.50	80.00	106.00	69.50
	Wilcoxon W	210.50	185.00	211.00	205.50
	Z	-1.57	-1.51	-0.25	-1.78
	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.12	0.13	0.80	<b>0.08</b>
	Exact Sig. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)]	.120 <sup>b</sup>	.193 <sup>b</sup>	.822 <sup>b</sup>	.077 <sup>b</sup>

**C. Comparison of the Semantic Feature Production, Average Response Onset time, Code mixed responses, and Omitted Responses for all the three categories between Male and Female participants of Geriatric Group (Group B).**

On comparing the responses obtained from the male and female participants in Geriatric group, no statistically significant difference ( $p > 0.05$ ) was obtained for feature production, code mixed responses and omitted responses for all categories included in the study. However, statistically significant difference ( $p < 0.05$ ) was obtained in response onset time (Table 3.1)

Christau et al., 2018 stated that delay in audiovisual response time was observed in the elderly group. This suggest that the older people should pay more attention to the general movements. Raquel 2002, studies the gender and aging moderate brain behaviour relationships Neuroanatomical studies with Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) indicate the progressive decrease in brain volume affects fronto- temporal brain regions in brain in males when compared to females. These results correlate with the results obtained in the present study providing an attributable cause for slow processing and increased response onset time in Geriatrics. Subjective Observation of the Average Response Onset Time also revealed that female participants had a quicker Response onset time when compared to the male participants adhering to the neurobiological evidence observed.

*Table 3.1 . Test statistics for Average Response Onset Time in Geriatrics for all the categories chosen*

Category		AVG ROT-1	AVG-ROT 2	AVG-ROT 3
Geriatrics	Mann-Whitney U	42.00	42.00	42.00
	Wilcoxon W	147.00	147.00	147.00
	Z	-2.91	-2.91	-2.91
	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.001</b>	<b>0.001</b>
	Exact Sig. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)]	.003 <sup>b</sup>	.003 <sup>b</sup>	.003 <sup>b</sup>

On observing the trend that governs the production of Semantic features it is very important to appreciate the differences that is redundant in the production of features as well as various factors that can possibly attribute to the results across age, gender and linguistic familiarity.

## Conclusion

Semantic Feature production could be considered as a measure of understanding how well the concepts are organized and interlinked at the level of cortex. Semantic Feature Association is an evidence-based practice that could be used to work on naming in aphasics. However, there are subjective differences of opinions regarding the cues that must be provided to facilitate naming for any category of the words that is considered for therapy. This study can act as a baseline for overcoming this subjective bias. In the futuristic perspective expanding this study including different class of words from all the semantic categories in Tamil, correlating the results with the help of neuroimaging techniques, and administering it on the various disordered population will further increase the value of this study.

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## Pronominal Features in Shahlang Nongdaju, a Variety of Khasi

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### Abstract

Nongdaju is a sub variety of Lyngngam, a variety of Khasi belonging to Mon- Khmer branch of Austro-Asiatic language. It is primarily spoken in West Khasi Hills District of Meghalaya, India. The data have been obtained from six native speakers who were above the age of 45 years. This paper examines how the nature of pronouns and the pronominal forms are reflected in the pronominal system of this variety. The analyses of data reveal that the Personal Pronouns in Shahlang Nongdaju has a free form and function alone within the noun phrase and the personal pronouns exhibited in the object position are considered as strong pronouns. Gender and number are not marked by any grammatical features before the noun or head noun. The interrogative particles encode grammatical features of locative case marker /*hə*/. The reflexive pronouns have both mono-morphemic and poly-morphemic reduplicated form and the reciprocals are exhibited only in plural pronominal forms. In addition, data analysis reveals that personal pronouns can be formed and functioned both morphologically and syntactically.

**Keywords:** Khasi, Nongdaju, pronominals, personal pronouns, gender.

### 1. Introduction

Nongdaju is a sub variety of Lyngngam (Bareh, 1977), a variety of Khasi belonging to Mon-Khmer



branch of Austro-Asiatic language family (Diffloth, 2005). Khasi has four dialects, such as: Jaintia or Pnar, War, Bhoi and Lyngngam (Grierson, 1904). Nongdaju is located in Mawshynrut Tehsil of West Khasi Hills District in Meghalaya, India. It is situated 32km away from sub-district headquarter Mawshynrut and 75km away from District Headquarter Nongstoin. Nongdaju is represented by Nongdaju and Nongriangmaw. These two villages are located in the western parts of West Khasi Hills bordering Garo Hills. Nongdaju is the hearth of Lyngngam area. According to the Government of India Census 2011, Nongdaju has a total population of 584 people. The Nongdaju Village consists mostly of the Lyngngam community and also other inhabitants of Meghalaya either Garo, Khasis from West Khasi Hills and few Nepalese. The major objective of this study is to describe the nature of pronouns and to analyse the pronominal forms as reflected in the pronominal system of this variety of language. For this research the data have been collected from the native speakers who were above the age of 45 years. This research is descriptive in nature and Basic Linguistic Theory has been used in analysing the data. The place of research area has been encircled and shown in the following map of Meghalaya.



Map.1. Map of Meghalaya

Source: [www.mapsofindia.com/maps/meghalaya](http://www.mapsofindia.com/maps/meghalaya). (25/08/2025, 08:30PM)

## 2. Literature Review

According to Huddleston & Pullum (2005), a pronoun is a small unit of grammatical features

which constitute a small class of nouns where it can be distinguished syntactically from common nouns or proper nouns. Lyon (1999) states that pronoun is a grammatical unit which constitute a small functional category with different kinds of pronouns. Payne (1997) believes pronouns as clitics which can be used as an honorific term where it can be based mostly on the relative status of the speech act of the participant. Jacobs (1995) claims that pronouns are the only elements of the noun phrase and are functional forms of nouns. The personal pronouns such as *we*, *he*, *i* are the subjective and *me*, *he*, *her* are the objective forms of pronouns. The NP internal possessive pronouns such as *your* and *my*, occur in the subject position which is inside another noun phrases which can be used as definite articles and preceding the head noun. However, independent possessive pronouns like *yours*, *hers* and *mine* can stand on its own as a noun phrase. It is intended to be indefinite articles and follows the head noun. Therefore, the personal pronouns of subjective and objective pronouns, the NP internal possessive pronouns and the independent possessive pronouns are considered as pronominals.

Sinha (2013) asserts that pronominals are being categorised into different categories, such as personal pronouns, indefinite pronouns, interrogative pronouns, honorific, deitics, inclusive or exclusive pronouns and enclitic pronominals or pronominal suffixes. Brinton (2000) agrees that person is divided into three categories such as the 1<sup>st</sup> Person, 2<sup>nd</sup> Person and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Person. The 1<sup>st</sup> Person refers to the speaker, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Person refers to the hearer and the third person refers to the thing which is spoken about. He further mentions that the distribution of person is revealed by the grammatical categories or the inflectional systems of pronouns in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular, present tense and which is indicative of verbs by the inflection 's.' However, '*you*' is also considered as a generic person which is commonly used in non- formal forms. Huddleston and Pullum (2005) describe gender as a categorization of noun phrases which has numerous features in some languages. Gender shows the different forms in third person singular pronouns where it mentions that gender are of three types. They are masculine, feminine and neuter gender.

Brinton (2000) examines that numbers are of two types, such as singular and plural form. Number is indicated by the inflectional (-s) as in count nouns like *dog/dogs*. The inflectional system is expressed in demonstrative pronouns like *this/these* and the personal pronouns of the 1<sup>st</sup> person and the 3<sup>rd</sup> person, such as *me/us*, *myself/ourselves*. Furthermore, number is also expressed the

different forms of singular and plural forms of pronouns, such as *every, each, someone, anybody, all, many, few, most*, etc. Arshad and Arshad (2020) assert that there are two types of personal pronouns, they are: subjective or nominative and accusative or objective personal pronouns. Nominative personal pronouns are used in the subject position, such as *i, you, we, they, it* whereas objective personal pronouns like *him, them* and *us*, are used in the final position. Personal pronouns may have many different forms, roles and features to assign cases.

According to Morenberg (1997:84), indefinite pronouns do not refer to any specific nouns but it refers to general nouns. The most common indefinite pronouns are *somebody, anybody, everybody, nobody, something, anything, everything, nothing, someone, anyone, everyone* and *no one*. Zandvoort (1962:168) asserts that several forms of indefiniteness, such as *some, any, each, every, either*, etc. Indefinite pronouns may also know as distributive or general rather than indefinite. The indefinite pronouns of *some* can be singular and plural form as well. In singular form, *some* refers to particular things or persons of an unknown or unspecified or it can refer to a certain quantity of something. According to Huddleston and Pullum (2005), reflexive pronouns are of two forms. One can function as compliment and the other as empathetic. Compliment exhibits as a close syntactic relation to an antecedent whereas empathetic is used as reflexive forms and act as a modifier within a clause. Wardhaugh (1999) discusses that there are various forms of reciprocal pronouns. They are: *each other* and *one another*. *Each other* is usually used when there are two references whereas *one another* are usually require two or more referents.

### 3. Data Analyses

#### 3.1. Personal Pronouns in Shahlang Nongdaju

Personal Pronouns in Shahlang Nongdaju have a free form and function alone within the noun phrase. Rynjah (2023) believes that the personal pronouns in War-Khasi and War Jaintia have significant inflectional categories of Person, Number and Gender (PNG Ag.) to facilitate agreement and concord in a sentence. Similarly, the personal pronouns in Shahlang Nongdaju have significant inflectional categories of person, number and gender and there is specification for gender marker in second and third singular pronominal forms for feminine and masculine. Table 1 below shows the personal pronouns with declensions for grammatical case, number and gender

Nominative			Accusative	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
<b>First Person</b>	/na/ 'I'	/yaw/ 'We'	/sna/ 'me'	/siaw/ 'us'
<b>Second Person</b>	Ø	/p <sup>h</sup> aw/ 'you'	Ø	/sp <sup>h</sup> aw/ 'you'
<b>Second Person Masculine</b>	/mi/ 'you'	/p <sup>h</sup> aw/ 'you'	/smi/ 'you'	/sp <sup>h</sup> aw/ 'you'
<b>Second Person Feminine</b>	/p <sup>h</sup> ie/ 'you'	/p <sup>h</sup> aw/ 'you'	/sp <sup>h</sup> ie/ 'you'	/sp <sup>h</sup> aw/ 'you'
<b>Third Person Masculine</b>	/uju/ 'he'	/kudu/ 'they'	/uju/ 'he'	/kudu/ 'they'
<b>Third Person Feminine</b>	/gju/ 'she'		/gju/ 'she'	

Table 1 Personal pronouns Chart in Shahlang Nongdaju

### 3.1.1. Personal Pronouns in Subject Sentences

In Shahlang Nongdaju, the subject and object personal pronouns are overtly expressed. The subject personal pronouns are exhibited in the initial position of the sentence and are placed before the verb as cited below examples

1. (i) *na* pule kɔt

1SG read book

'I read a book.'

(ii) *yaw* pule kɔt

1PL read book

'We read a book.'

(iii) *p<sup>h</sup>aw* pule kɔt

(iv) *p<sup>h</sup>ie* pule kɔt

2PL	read	book	2SG.F	read	book
	'You read a book.'			'You read a book.'	
(v)	<i>mi</i>	pule kɔt	(vi)	<i>ɲJu</i>	pule kɔt
	2SG.M	read book		3SG.F	read book
	'You read a book.'			'She reads a book.'	
(vii)	<i>kudu</i>	di? c <sup>h</sup> a y:u			
	3PL	go LOC market			
	'They go to the market.'				

### 3.1.2. Personal Pronouns in Object Sentences

Lyngdoh (2017) claims that Khasi pronouns are exhibited in the object position are considered as strong and pure pronominals.

In Shahlang Nongdaju, the object personal pronouns are formed by the interaction between the accusative case marker /*se*/ and the first singular personal pronouns /*na*/ in sentence 2(i), the first plural personal pronoun /*yaw*/ in sentence number 2(ii) and second personal pronouns /*p<sup>h</sup>aw*/, /*mi*/ and /*p<sup>h</sup>ie*/ in sentence number 2 (iii) to 2 (v) which brings to a sound change as /*sna*/, /*syiaw*/, /*sp<sup>h</sup>aw*/, /*smi*/ and /*sp<sup>h</sup>ie*/ as shown in sentences 2 (i) through 2 (v). However, in third pronominal form, the object personal pronouns remained identical with the subject pronouns as cited in sentences no 2 (vi) through 2 (viii) and are placed after the verb

2. (i)	uJu	pindai	<i>sna</i>	(ii)	uJu	pindai	<i>syiaw</i>
	3SG.M	love	1SG		3SG.M	love	1PL
	'He loves me.'			'He loves us.'			
(iii)	na	pindai	<i>sp<sup>h</sup>aw</i>	(iv)	na	pindai	<i>smi</i>



below examples

- (5) *yiet yiet* la? ban di? tə skur

IND IND can INF go LOC school

‘Anybody can go to the school.’

- (6) *net net* la? ban tre se kam am bna

IND IND can INF do ACC work GEN 1SG

‘Anyone can do my work.’

- (7) ʃɔn baŋ **met met** bo -re tei

john eat IND IND PL -REL healthy

‘John is eating something healthy’

### 3.4. Interrogatives

Interrogative pronouns are categorised into two types: polar (yes-no) questions and constituent (wh) questions. Polar questions in Shahlang Nongdaju differ only by intonation whereas Wh questions remain in-situ and can also move which results to wh-Movement. In sentences no (10) and (11), the interrogative particles are found to attach with the locative case marker /hə/ as prefixed and exhibited both in the initial and final position of the sentence. However, the Interrogative Pronouns in Shahlang Nongdaju are marked by different markers, such as /**yiet**/, /**katnət**/, /**bet**/, /**hənet**/ as cited below examples

- (8) mi dəw *yiat?*

2SG.M COP INT

‘Who are you?’

- (9) *yiat* bimɔŋ am mi?

INT name GEN 2SG.M

‘What is your name?’

(10) p<sup>h</sup>aw cɔŋ *hə-net*?

2SG stay LOC-INT

‘Where do you stay?’

(11) *hə-net* p<sup>h</sup>aw cɔŋ?

LOC-INT 2SGstay

‘Where do you stay?’

### 3.5. Anaphors

According to Lyngdoh (2000), anaphors in Khasi has both reflexive and reciprocal. The reflexive expresses in both mono-morphemic and poly-morphemic forms while the nominal reflexive in Khasi has been used as the case marker ‘*lade*.’ The mono-morphemic anaphors in Khasi carries a lexical Case Marker (CM) to its left because Khasi has preposition. However, Lyngdoh (2000) also discusses on the reduplicated poly-morphemic in Khasi.

Shahlang Nongdaju exhibits the same as Standard Khasi that it has a mono-morphemic and reduplicated poly-morphemic forms. The mono-morphemic is the nominal reflexive that it has a case marker /*se*/ and /*bə*/ and the reduplicated poly-morphemic is indicated as /*bə hinjɔŋ se hinjɔŋ*/ and are found to occur after the verb as cited below examples

#### 3.5.1. Nominal Reflexives

In Shahlang Nongdaju, the nominal mono-morphemic reflexive is indicated by /*se hinjɔŋ*/ as shown in sentence no (12) and sentence no (13) is indicated by /*bə hinjɔŋ*/ and sentences (14) through (15) are indicated by /*bə hinjɔŋ*/ and /*se hinjɔŋ*/ in reduplicated poly-morphemic form. The nominal reflexive /*hinjɔŋ*/ are found to occur after the grammatical case markers /*se*/ and /*bə*/ as a prefix marker. The nominal reflexive has the antecedent where it refers back to the subject within the same clause and agrees in number and gender as cited below examples



(12) ʃɔni pindai *se hin-ʃɔŋi*

john love ACC NOM-self

‘John loves himself.’

(13) bei re ut jhur *bə hin-ʃɔŋi*

mother SAM cut vegetable INST NOM-self

‘My mother cut vegetables by herself.’

(14) uʃu rip *bə hin-ʃɔŋ se hin-ʃɔŋi*

3SG.M beat INST NOM-self ACC NOM-self

‘He beats himself.’

(15) uʃu kraʔ *bə hin-ʃɔŋ se hin-ʃɔŋi*

3SG.M talk INST NOM.self ACC NOM-self

‘He talked to himself.’

### 3.5.2. Reciprocals

The Reciprocal forms in Shahlang Nongdaju exhibit only in plural pronominal form. Shahlang Nongdaju has four Reciprocal forms. They are

(i) wəl se wəl

(ii) wəl həlor wəl

(iii) mar kylliaŋ

#### 3.5.2.1. wəl se wəl

Shahlang Nongdaju, like Khasi (Lyngdoh 2000) show composite reciprocals in reduplication forms in which the two parts of reduplication is intervened by the accusative case marker /*se*/ to

numeral one which is attached to person and number

(16) kudu re nia pindai *wəl se wəl*

3PLU SAM VC love one ACC one

‘They love one another.’

(17) yaw re nia kinnan *wəl se wəl*

3PLU SAM VC understand one ACC one

‘We understand one another.’

### 3.5.2.2. *wəl halor wəl*

Shahlang Nongdaju also exhibits */wəl halor wəl/* ‘one prep one’ as shown below sentences where the two parts of reduplication occur by the prepositional marker */halor/* in between the reduplication and it is attached only in plural pronominal form.

(18) kudu re nia kinno? *wəl halor wəl*

3PLU SAM VC blame one PREP one

‘They blame on one another.’

(19) kudu re nia pindai *wəl halor wəl*

3PLU SAM VC love one PREP one

‘They love on one another.’

### 3.5.2.3. Mar-Kylliaŋ

According to Lyngdoh (2000, p 34), *mar kylliaŋ* ‘distribution- change’ can replace the other reciprocal form in Khasi. Shahlang Nongdaju also exhibits */mar- kylliaŋ/* which is also the same as Khasi reciprocals and are placed after the verb as exemplified below examples

(20) kudu re nia pindai *mar-kylliaŋ*

3PLU SAM VC love dist.change

‘They love each other.’

(21) kudu re nia kinnoʔ *mar-kylliaŋ*

3PL SAM VC blame dist.change

‘They blame each other.’

#### 4. Conclusions

The analyses of data reveal that the personal pronouns in Shahlang Nongdaju are distinguished for person, number and gender. Gender is distinguished only in second and third singular pronominal forms. However, gender is not marked by any grammatical features before the noun. The personal pronouns in Shahlang Nongdaju exhibit both in subject and object position. However, the object personal pronouns are formed by the interaction between the morphemes which brings to a sound change. Interestingly, the indefinite pronouns occur by the process of syntactic and morphological process of reduplicated form. Interrogative pronouns are categorised into two types: polar (yes-no) questions and constituent (wh) questions. The interrogative particles are found to attach with the locative case marker /*hə*/ as prefixed and exhibited both in the initial and final position of the sentence. In addition, Anaphors in Shahlang Nongdaju exhibits both nominal reflexives and reciprocals. The nominal reflexives can either be mono-morphemic and poly-morphemic in morphology. The nominal mono-morphemic reflexives is indicated by /*se hinʃəŋ*/ and /*bə hinʃəŋ*/. The reflexive / *hinʃəŋ*/ are found to occur after the grammatical case markers /*se*/ and /*bə*/ as a prefix marker and the reflexive poly-morphemic reduplicated form is indicated as /*bə hinʃəŋ se hinʃəŋ*/. The reciprocal forms are realized by the repetition of numeral /*wəl*/ which is intervened by the case marker /*se*/ and /*həlor*/ and the reciprocal marker / *mar-kylliaŋ*/ ‘distribution- change’ is also expressed and placed after the verb. The Reciprocal forms exhibited only in plural pronominal form.

#### Abbreviations

1SG:	First Singular
1PL:	First Plural
2SG:	Second Singular
2PL:	Second Plural
2SG.M:	Second Singular Masculine
2SG.F:	Second Singular Feminine
3SG.M:	Third Singular Masculine
3SG.F:	Third Singular Feminine
3PL:	Third Plural
SAM:	Subject Agreement Marker
VC:	Verbal Collective
ACC:	Accusative Case
INST:	Instrumental Case
INF:	Infinitive
GEN:	Genitive
IND:	Indefinite

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## Words that Sell: A Stylistic Inquiry into Hindi and Bengali Advertisements

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### Abstract

Commercial advertisements leverage linguistic tools to enhance appeal, engagement, and persuasion. These tools not only contribute to the overall allure of the advertisements but also serve to highlight the brand identity and product functionality. The present study endeavours to systematically investigate these intriguing aspects across select Hindi and Bengali commercial advertisements through stylistic analysis. The study incorporates a systematically curated corpus of 100 Hindi and Bengali commercial advertisements spanning diverse products, with a distribution of 50 drawn from audio-visual media and the remaining from print media. Employing an observational approach, the collected data undergoes meticulous linguistic analysis, leading to the identification and categorisation of prevalent linguistic tools and devices. The ensuing examination delineates the nuanced functions of each linguistic device employed in Hindi and Bengali commercial advertisements, substantiating the discussion with illustrative examples. Furthermore, the research provides statistical insights into the frequency of occurrence for each type of linguistic tool, elucidating variations in their utilisation across Hindi and Bengali commercial advertisements, thereby contributing to the interdisciplinary exploration of language

and media.

**Keywords:** Linguistics, Stylistics, Hindi and Bengali Advertisement, Tagline, Linguistic Tools

## 1. Introduction

Advertising is considered a type of communication because it has impacted not just the way we speak and live, but also the everyday interactions we have. Advertisements surround us everywhere; we see huge billboards, pages of newspapers filled with all kinds of ads, corners of our television screens, and constant interruptions in all the content that we watch or hear on the radio (El-Dali, 1996). Elements such as brand logos, names, and jingles related to these brands are ingrained in the consciousness of each one of us (Beasley and Danesi, 2010). In all these commercials, language plays a crucial role. Everyone is in a race to make the most attractive and creative ad to attract consumers. They try to add layers of meaning, depth, allure, and persuasion to woo the customers and to convey the message. Some of the advertisements are very creative; they are loaded with metaphors, similes, and alliterations, among other linguistic devices at our disposal, including prose and poetry with multiple meanings, also promising simple products to be something profound and life-changing.

These advertisements are crafted with catchy slogans, clever wordplay, and persuasive rhetoric to leave a long-lasting impression on our subconscious minds. In recent times, it has also been noticed that in some cases, the advertisement and the products are not even remotely close or associated in any way. By creating such advertisements, brands try to work on the minds of consumers and make them more engaged with the ad. Advertisements are one of the categories that brands use to influence consumers. Taglines are the most concise and effective way a brand can present itself and its products. Taglines capture the identity of the product and convey a message by relating it to the lives of the consumers. Brands, through these taglines, try to capture the attention of customers by including various linguistic and cultural features depending on their audience. It is believed to have a power that engages and inspires the audience but also leaving an indelible mark on the psyche of the customers. These taglines are made in such a way that they are remembered by the customers.

The present study aims to look at the use of linguistic tools in such commercial taglines. This study uses a comparative analysis of advertisement taglines in two South Asian languages, Hindi and Bengali. The analysis includes carefully looking at the taglines at the level of morphology, syntax, and stylistics. By analysing the dataset based at these levels, the present study aims to bring out the intricate interplay between language and TV commercials. To get a better understanding, the study also tries to uncover the nuances of the usage of language – such as slogans, witty wordplay, and rhetorical strategies – in the selected dataset of these two languages. The analysis also focuses on cultural references, idiomatic expressions, and grammatical structures specific to the regions where these languages are spoken. In the analysis we also look at the different cultural references that these taglines bring in to enhance the effectiveness of these taglines and to resonate with the audience as well. By understanding these features of the taglines, we bring insights of the cultural preferences, norms, and techniques used by the brands in the diverse marketing strategies we observe around us.

The purpose of the study is to find out the linguistic features various brands use to enhance the appeal and thereby influence the engagement of these advertisements through taglines. The analysis includes bringing out the linguistic tools that are used to captivate the attention of the customers. Finally, the comparative analysis of the two languages seeks to provide specific insights into the cultural references that enhance the effectiveness of these advertisements by capturing attention, elicit emotions, and influencing overall consumer behaviour.

The objectives of the present study are:

1. To see which syntactic constituents are frequent in the wording of the taglines.
2. To identify the morphological processes in the taglines.
3. To identify the stylistic markers, like figurative language and rhetorical devices, used in creating these taglines.

The paper is divided into five sections. The first section expands on the role of language in advertisements, diverse strategies that are a part of consciously curating these taglines, and finally, the objective of the study. The next section provides an overview of the review of related literature, including research that has focused on examining advertisements from a stylistic and linguistic



point of view. The third section outlines the methodology employed for the analysis of the selected taglines, and finally, the last section mentions the findings and discussion around these taglines. The paper ends with a conclusion derived from the study and with recommendations and an acknowledgement of limitations while conducting the present research.

## **2. Literature Review:**

Advertisement is a very powerful tool that can be used as a mode of one-way communication between the seller and the buyer. It contains certain linguistic patterns and structures that are carefully chosen by the seller to make the advertisement more persuasive to the buyer. To explore these linguistic patterns and structures is a topic of considerable interest in linguistics and mass communication. Here, the body of literature deals with the stylistic analysis of advertisements in different languages across the world.

Fomukong (2016) studied the stylistic patterns of the billboards of Dangote Cement using The Textual Conceptual Functions framework proposed by Jeffries (2016). Different textual functions, such as prioritisation, suggesting an assumption, listing, naming, and description, are used in the analysis of this study, which shows how context plays an important role in revealing functions and the underlying meaning of a text. The study concludes with the fact that stylistic devices used in the advertisement carry positivity and a common ground that helps the readers recognise the advertisement and create an urge in them to buy the product. Similarly, Rashid (2022) examined commercial advertisements on Facebook with the same theoretical framework and found that the advertisers use a single quality of their products and make it different from their competitors' products. Rashid found that advertisers intentionally create an idealized, pinky picture of the world, and when customers use that product, they make the customer desire to get that.

Among the studies that are done on Indian languages, Ray (2022) gathered sixty famous advertisements from the Indian commercial context and found linguistic patterns at the phonological, morphological, syntactical, and semantic levels. At the phonological level, devices like 'rhyme,' 'alliteration,' 'consonance,' and 'assonance' are found. The morphological level includes processes like 'affixation,' 'neologisms,' 'hybridization,' 'reduplication,' and 'code-mixing.' The syntactic level consists of devices like 'Small and Catchy Phrases,'

‘Imperative/Declarative Sentences,’ and ‘Parallelism.’ Figurative devices such as ‘Simile’, ‘metaphor’, ‘hyperbole’ and ‘personification’ are also found in this study at the semantic level. But this study does not give emphasis only on Indian languages; it includes advertisements from both Hindi and English. Another study by Rahman and Warsi in the year 2022 explores the use of English expressions in Hindi TV advertisements. Their study also shows different linguistic devices used in advertisements. But the main focus here is on the use of English expressions that are used in Hindi commercials, and to what extent English is used. And whether this use of English varies with the channel, target audience, and product/service being advertised or not. This study also lacks the fact that the emphasis is not given only to Indian languages.

Overall, after looking through various scholarly works, it is felt that there is a dearth of works in Indian languages on the topic of stylistic analysis of advertisements, especially in Hindi and Bengali.

### **3. Methodology**

We have employed a comparative research design to carry out the linguistic analysis of randomly curated fifty advertisement taglines in Hindi and Bengali from varied sources like the internet, newspapers, magazines, television commercials, etc. First, the taglines were transcribed word-for-word in an accessible notation for universal readability. Second, we performed a multidimensional linguistic analysis of the taglines, where we looked at morphological, syntactic, and stylistic aspects of the taglines. We looked for morphological processes like inflection, derivation, and compounding in the taglines. Syntactically, we looked at the structure of the phrase or clause of the taglines, including average word length, word order and sentence complexity. At the stylistic level, we investigated the use of rhetorical devices like alliterations, metaphors, puns, and similes, among other figurative uses of language, in order to make the taglines compelling and persuasive. Subsequently, we investigated the patterns, similarities, and differences between the tagline datasets of the two languages.

### **4. Results & Discussion**

#### **4.1. Hindi**

We found the average word length of the selected taglines to be 5.5, indicating that most taglines consist of approximately five words. Interestingly, verbs or verb phrases were rampant in the form of the taglines. In addition, our examination revealed that 65% of the Hindi taglines are formed as Declaratives, followed by Imperatives at 25%, and Interrogatives at 10%. Further analysis revealed the presence of figurative devices within the dataset, indicating a variety of devices employed in creating the Ad taglines. These figurative devices include Rhyming in the form of catchy jingles (e.g., "viks kī golī lo, khic-khic dur karo"), use of Metaphors (e.g., "BRAIN IS ROOM" as in "dimāg kī batti jalā de"), Simile to demonstrate a clear comparison between two things (e.g., "dudh sī saphedī"), Oxymoron to make the statement look more catchy (e.g., "dāg acche hai"), Onomatopoeia to express the emotions/situation directly (e.g., "jingā lālā"), Alliteration to grab attention (e.g., "kiṭ kaeṭ brek bantā hai"), and Hyperbole to make big claims (e.g., "deś kā simenṭ"). The taglines show a remarkable use of hyperbole in about 50% of the taglines, followed by metaphor and simile observed in 16.7% of the taglines, and alliteration and oxymoron in 8.3% of the dataset.

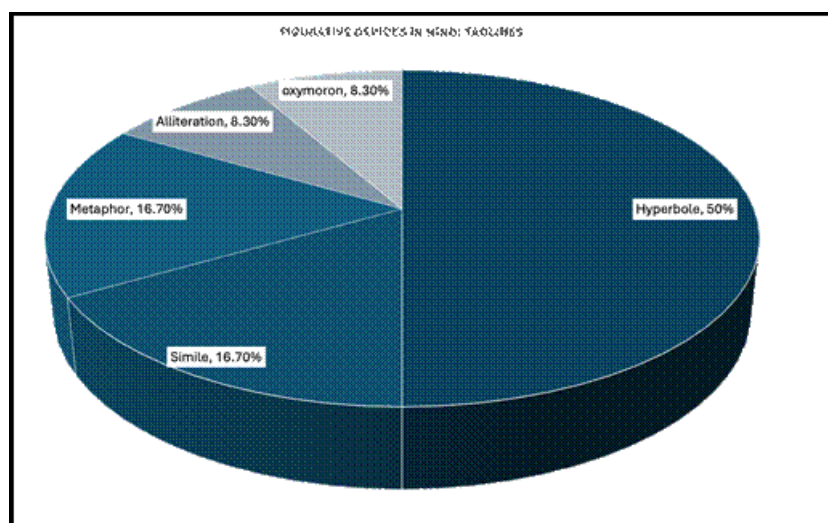


Fig. 1: Distribution of these figurative devices in the selected examples of Hindi taglines in the advertisements.

The pragmatic analysis of the current paper also aimed to decipher the emotional appeal invoked by these taglines. It has been found that these taglines are formed around various themes. Such as, themes of Fear (e.g., "dobārā mat puchnā"), Strength (e.g., "bhaiyā ye dīvār tuṭ tī kyu nahī"), Greed (e.g., "jī lalcāye rahā nā jāye"), Solidarity (e.g., "deś kā siment"), and Security (e.g., "jindagī ke sāth bhī, jindagī ke bād bhī"). In terms of morphological processes, the taglines exhibited features such as Compound Nouns (e.g., "kiṭ kaṭ brek"), Compound Verbs (e.g., "jān jāo"), Conjunctive Participial constructions (e.g., "apnā lak pehen ke calo"), and Reduplication (e.g., "khic-khic"). Interestingly, another prevalent linguistic phenomenon of code mixing was observed on multiple occasions, wherein multiple languages were utilised within the taglines. In most cases, the other language was found to be English, for example, 'luck' in *apnā lak pehen ke calo*; 'break' in *kiṭ kaṭ brek bantā hai*.

## 4.2. Bengali

Upon analysing the Bengali data, it was found that the average word length of the taglines in the collective data is 5.2, similar to that of the Hindi data. Also, the taglines were in the form of verb phrases (VP). However, there are instances of noun phrases (NP) taglines as well. Additionally, multiple figurative devices are found, which are being employed in the construction of Bengali Ad taglines too. The figurative devices found in Bengali advertisements are similar to Hindi dataset. The examples of these devices include - Rhyming as instantiated in *phruṭi āche to pārṭi āche* "Frooti is there so Party is there", Repetition to emphasise an idea/concept as in *thāṇḍā thāke thāṇḍā rākhe* "Stays cool, keeps cool", Hyperbole for an effect employed in *sundor cul sobār odhikār* "Beautiful hair is everyone's right", Metaphor to compare two sets of ideas *dudher solidḍ dost* "best friend of milk", Jingles to present an idea interestingly, observed in *shudhu ekti saridon, matha dhora theke dey aram, sudhu ekti saridon* "Only one Saridon, gives relief from headache. Only one Saridon", Rhetorical Questions to emphasise a point as seen in *āpnār tuth peṣṭe ki nun āche?* "Does your toothpaste have salt?" and Emotional Appeals to make a product more relatable to the consumers as showcased in the Ad *māyer bhorshā shudhu deṭoler socchotā* "Mother only believes in the cleanliness of Dettol".

The frequency of occurrence of these figurative devices used in Bengali advertisements is depicted

in Fig. 2 below. As is evident, the highest occurring figurative devices are Hyperbole (27.30%) and Rhyming (27.30%), and the others include Repetition, Emotional appeal, Jingles, Metaphor, and Rhetorical questions, observed to have the same frequency.

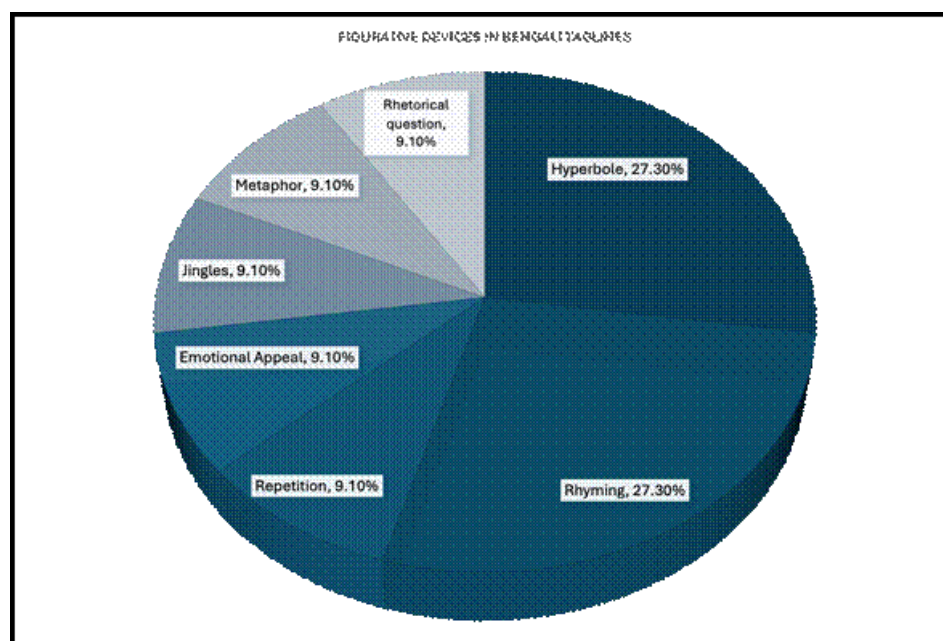


Fig. 2: Distribution of these figurative devices in the selected examples of Bangla taglines in the advertisements.

## 5. Conclusion

The present study, which aimed to analyse the advertisement taglines linguistically, comes up with several significant trends. Hindi ads were found to employ more declaratives (65%) than imperatives (15%). Whereas Bengali utilises almost no imperatives with the overwhelming usage of declaratives (90%). This shows that the declaratives are the most preferred form of taglines. In terms of the usage of figurative devices, hyperbole emerged as the most frequently employed rhetorical strategy in both languages, among others like alliteration and oxymoron. This indicates the fact that exaggeration is used as a persuasive technique by the advertising industry to promote products and appeal to the attention of buyers. If we observe the number of words per tagline, the average length of the selected taglines in both languages is approximately five words. Short

taglines are employed as they are more likely to be remembered by consumers. To sum up, the findings of the study signify the usage of linguistic and rhetorical strategies in advertising, and also the role of linguistic factors in shaping these messages through these ads. These insights into the linguistic tools and their impact on the appeal and involvement of commercials can provide markets with essential knowledge in creating impactful and persuasive campaigns. We recommend similar cross-linguistic and cross-cultural studies exploring the similarities and differences in the depiction of advertisements in other Indian languages. This can inform us of the linguistic and cultural preferences reflected through the linguistic analysis of the taglines.

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## Phonological Processes in Repaired Tessier Type -3 & 10 Cleft- A Rare Case Report

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### Abstract

Tessier type 3 & 10 clefts are grouped under rare craniofacial clefts [1, 2]. The occurrence of rare craniofacial clefts is reported in 0.7–5.4 out of 1000 cases of cleft lip and palate[3]. Tessier facial clefts involve mouth, maxilla, eyes, nose, and forehead; and may extend to viscerocranium and neurocranium too. These clefts are numbered from 0 to 14, representing the extension of the cleft. These clefts can be described as oro-ocular cleft and fronto-nasal dysplasia [1].

Phonological processes provide provisional pronunciations during the developmental period of a child as he masters adult like pronunciations [3]. They also influence the lexical and grammatical competence in a child [4]. There is variety of phonological processes identified in children and they vary across languages [5]. These processes gradually get suppressed as the child's phonetic and language skills mature [3]. However, in some children, these processes remain un-suppressed indicating poor mastery on the production of speech sounds of the native language of the child [6].

**Keywords:** Tessier type 3&10 clefts, craniofacial clefts, phonological processes, pronunciations, phonetic skills.

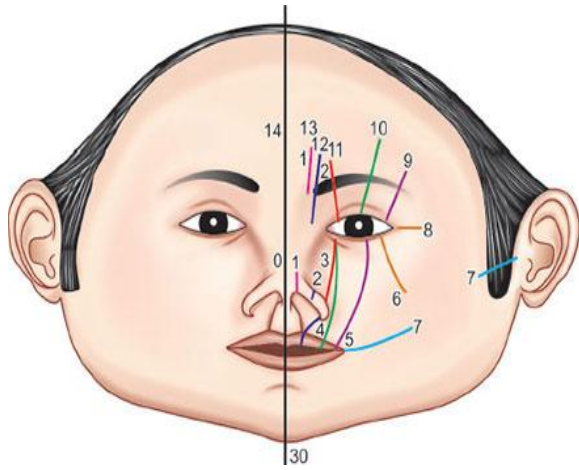
## **Background**

Several studies suggest that the speech sound errors in children with cleft lip and palate (CLP) are not merely articulation disorder but are errors with phonological consequences [7]. Different phonological processes have been noted in children with CLP such as, final consonant deletion, initial consonant deletion, nasalization, velar assimilation, nasal assimilation, backing, nasal preference, and glottal insertion [7, 8]. Delayed suppression of phonological processes in children with CLP compared to age matched peers has also been reported,[9].

Due to dearth of study on Phonological processes in repaired Tessier Type-3& 10 cleft, the case report is aimed to identifying the number and types of phonological processes characteristic in children with Repaired Tessier Type -3 & 10 Cleft. The case report study will provide in-depth information in to the Phonological processes in Tessier type-3 & 10 cleft.

## **Case Report**

A 5-years- old boy, diagnosed with Tessier type-3&10clefts had the following deformities: frontal encephalocele, eyelid coloboma, mongoloid eye and fronto nasal dysplasia, (Figure. 2 & 3).He had undergone facial repair with an interdigitating local flap at 3 years age and palatoplasty the following year. Present examination revealedUpper eyelid coloboma of the left eye, epicanthal fold and microphthalmia on the left. Aesthetically balanced surgical closure was achieved using multiple Z- Plasty flaps, taking care of not damaging Infraorbital nerve and lacrimal duct. Symmetry of nose and lip was completely achieved. Sutures were removed on 7<sup>th</sup> post-operative day. At 5 years of age the coloboma of eyelid was repaired.



**Figure 1: Tessier craniofacial cleft classification, Oral Nasal: Clefts 0-3, Oral-Ocular: Clefts 4-6, Lateral Facial: Cleft 7-9, Cranial: 10-14.**



**Figure.2,Pre-Operative Photograph.**



**Figure.3,Post-Operative Photograph.**

The Photo articulation test (Developed by AYJNIHH, Mumbai) in Hindi was administered as an assessment tool. A total of 16 vowels, 30 consonants in initial, medial and final position and 11 blends were assessed. Initially consent for the study was taken from the parents of the child. The child was made comfortable and rapport was built. The examiner showed the pictures of the test and the child was asked to name the pictures. In case the child failed to name the picture, examiner named the picture and child was asked to repeat the same, and if the child was not able to identify the picture, verbal cues followed by modeling were utilized. When the child was successful in naming or repeating after the examiner, he was asked to repeat the target word to check for consistency. The responses were recorded using Apple Iphone-13 audio and videorecorder. The speech samples thus obtained were transcribed by the examiner who was native speaker of Hindi, using International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA).

The words transcribed were analyzed sound by sound to identify the presence of phonological processes [10, 11]. A total number of processes identified were listed separately. In instances, where the same phonological processes occurred more than once in the same word, the same was noted for further analysis. After identifying the number of phonological processes occurring, the data was further analyzed qualitatively for identifying the different types of phonological process.

### **Indian Studies on phonological processes in typically developing children.**

The researches on phonological processes are mostly from Western languages. However, there are

various few studies have been done focusing on the different Indian languages.

**Table 1: Details of studies done on Phonological processes in typically developing children in Indian languages.**

Sl. No.	Authors Name	Language in which Studies done	Age Group in which studies done	Phonological Processes
1	Sunil, A. (1998)	Kannada	3-4 years	Fronting, cluster reduction, initial consonant deletion and affrication
2	Jayashree, B. (1999)	Kannada	4-5 years	Fronting, cluster reduction and stopping
3	Ramadevi, K. J. S. (2001)	Kannada	5-6 years	Stridency deletion, deaspiration and retroflex deletion
4	Sameer, M. (1998)	Malayalam	3-4 years	Cluster reduction, final consonant deletion, epenthesis and deaffrication
5	Bharathy, R.(2001)	Tamil	3-4 years	Epenthesis, cluster reduction, gliding, nasal assimilation, voicing, deaffrication and fronting
6	Ranjan, R. (1999)	Hindi	4-5 years	Cluster reduction, partial reduplication and aspiration
7	Santhosh, M. (2001)	Hindi	3-4 years	Cluster reduction, epenthesis, fronting, gliding, metathesis, nasalization etc.
8	Rahul, M.	Hindi	2-3 years	Retroflex fronting, affrication,

	(2006)			stopping
9	Ramandeep, K,et al.,(2017)	Hindi	3-4 years	Consonant deletion, weak syllable deletion, epenthesis, fronting, palatalization, stopping, and aspiration

**Table 2: Details of Phonological processes identified in Repaired Tessier Type- 3& 10 Cleft.**

Sl No.	Phonological Processes	Repaired Tessier Type- 3 & 10 Cleft
1	Sound addition	+
2	Glottal fronting	+
3	Dental fronting	+
4	Initial consonant deletion	+
5	Metathesis	+
6	Pharyngeal replacement	+
7	Depalatalisation	+
8	Cluster substitution	+
9	Nasal assimilation	+
10	Liquid gliding	+
11	Deaffrication	+
12	Stopping	+
13	Other backing	+

14	Other substitutions	+
15	Affrication	+
16	Cluster simplification	+
17	Alveolar fronting	+
18	Context sensitive voicing	+
19	Glottal replacement	+
20	Nasal substitution	+
21	Frication	+
22	Syllable deletion	+
23	Retroflex fronting	+

Table 2, indicates the number and types of phonological processes present in repaired tessier type-3 & 10 cleft. There were 23 phonological processes were identified in repaired tessier type-3 & 10 cleft, which are Sound addition, Glottal fronting, Dental fronting, Initial consonant deletion, Metathesis, Pharyngeal replacement, Depalatalisation, Cluster substitution, Nasal assimilation, Liquid gliding, Deaffrication, Stopping, Other backing, Other substitutions, Affrication, Cluster simplification, Alveolar fronting, Context sensitive voicing, Glottal replacement, Nasal substitution, Frication, Syllable deletion, Retroflex fronting.

The phonological process identified in repaired tessier type-3 & 10 cleft is significantly more than that noted in studies done on typically developing children listed in Table 1. Hence the child with repaired Tessier Type-3& 10cleft had more number of phonological processes compared to typically developing children.



## Discussion

Case report results revealed that the child with repaired tessier type-3& 10 cleft had a greater number of phonological processes than compared to the studies done on typically developing children. This could be due to the fact that children with repaired tessier type-3 & 10 cleft are known to be at risk for not only phonetic based disorders but also phonologic disorders (21, 22 & 23). This phonologic disorders in children with repaired tessier type-3 & 10 cleft can be due to delayed acquisition of expressive language and /or due to the structural deviations present(24, 25),which may also be due to delayed suppression of developmental processes (25, 26).

Children with repaired tessier type- 3 & 10 cleft exhibited, 23 different processes, where 11 phonological processes such as retroflex fronting, depalatalization, deaffrication, stopping, other backing, affrication, cluster simplification, context sensitive voicing, liquid gliding, nasal assimilation and syllable deletion were developmental in nature (10, 12)). The remaining of the phonological processes glottal replacement, nasal substitution, pharyngeal replacement, frication, other substitutions, alveolar fronting, sound addition, cluster substitution and glottal fronting, Metathesis, Glottal fronting, Dental fronting, Initial consonant deletion are intrinsic in nature.

Children with corrected cleft lip and palate are known to have phonological disorders due to a delay in expressive language or an underlying physical deficiency (9, 24).

The articulatory errors in child with repaired tessier type-3& 10cleft are many and complex in nature. They are dependent on the age of surgery; the type and extent of cleft, age of initiation of speech therapy etc., (27). Children with repaired tessier type-3 & 10 cleft fail to develop smooth co-ordination between the velopharyngeal movement and movement between other articulators of speech (28). They also develop compensatory articulations where the place of articulation of phoneme is shifted more posteriorly in the vocal tract (29).

The results of case report indicate that, in child with repaired tessier type-3& 10cleft, the percentage of phonological processes are more. This indicates that child with repaired tessier type-3& 10cleft are far beyond typically developing children in terms of phonological processes

suppression. Hence the delay in suppression can also be one of the causes of more number of processes.

Glottal replacement, nasal substitution and frication were found to be more prominent, the findings of the present case report support the findings of previous studies which report that children with velopharyngeal dysfunction are prone to use glottal replacement and nasal substitution as a compensatory mechanism (22, 30).

The child diagnosed with tessier type-3 & 10 cleft had undergone surgery after the age of 3 years. Delayed surgery is known to be the primary cause of development of compensatory articulation which can become habituated. Lack of speech therapy following surgery can also be a contributing factor. Persistent use of compensatory articulation might have resulted in the productiveness of these processes [9].

Thus, the use of compensatory articulation leads to atypical phonological processes in child with repaired tessier type-3 & 10 cleft, which they use to communicate with family and friends. Further, as the family and friends also would have accustomed to children's erroneous processes, they would not have attempted to correct themselves. Thus, resulting in an increase in their percentage of occurrence.

## **Conclusion**

The results of the case study indicated that the number of phonological processes occurring in children with repaired tessier type-3 & 10 cleft is much greater than the typically developing children, possibly due to delay in surgery as well as not availing speech language therapy. With respect to the type of processes, children with repaired tessier type-3 & 10 cleft had different processes compared to typically developing children, amongst them Glottal replacement, nasal substitution and frication were the most productive processes. Both these observations could be due to the presence of structural variations and persistent use of compensatory articulation by children with repaired tessier type-3 & 10 cleft.

Children with repaired tessier type-3 & 10 cleft, hence require to undergo corrective surgery at an early age and to avail speech language therapy which will promote the development of normal

speech and language skills.

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## **The Influence of Learners Scaffolding on L2 Reading with Reference to Government College Students**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Learners scaffolding concept has been used in an effective way ever since Vygotsky introduced the term in relation to his socio-cultural theory, and the concept of learner's proximal development (ZPD- Zone of Proximal Development). It is characterized by how a learner learns with the support of teacher mediation till he/she needs a support. Over a period of time, the learner can do without the support of the teacher. There are no explicit rules in relation to the scaffolding concept. Teachers go about designing scaffolding framework depending on the proficiency level of the ESL learners. The present paper attempts to show the influence of scaffolding framework on L2 reading. It is based on an experiment conducted at the tertiary level. A specially designed reading (second language) task with a scaffolding framework has been used for a group of ESL learners. The following criteria namely overall comprehension, understanding specific context, analytical ability, vocabulary, interpreting the text, and reading speed have been used to evaluate their performance. As could be seen from the results, the experimental group of students have clearly outperformed control group of students. Further the study supports the idea of learners scaffolding within a specific task-based environment.

**Key Words-** ZPD, Zone of Proximal development, Scaffolding Framework, Over all

## 1. Introduction

Over the past few decades, scaffolding has become more and more common in second language learning. The term "scaffolding" actually refers to the theoretical concept in the field of education / applied linguistics, specifically in the context of learning a second language. However, this term has come to refer to any supporting instruction in a broader sense. The term "scaffolding" is a well-known concept frequently used in language and education to refer to the direction, cooperation, and assistance that help learners to learn new things in a simple way. The notion of scaffolding derives from a particular perspective on development and learning based on the work of Lev Vygotsky (1934/1986, 1978), and makes most sense within that context.

It is often associated with the concept of the "zone of proximal development" (ZPD), which is another phrase frequently used in educational discourse but is rarely used in reality with any degree of accuracy.

Scaffolding is an important skill for educators to utilize within a classroom setting. Mercer (2013) points out that the best strategies for scaffolding are through appropriation of information, construction of information, and transformation of an individual's reasoning or understanding.

He also adds that, these newer strategies also tend to focus on the collaborative aspects of scaffolding, rather than the individual retention and delivery of knowledge (Mercer 2013). Further, Black and Allen (2018) highlight that the best type of information to work with when scaffolding are real-life problems, as students need to be able to relate to the information. When students collaborate with information from real-world experiences or events, they are able to engage and apply that knowledge to different scenarios and the knowledge and skills can therefore become more transferable (Black and Allen 2018).

With the help of scaffolding a less experienced person can think more deeply and to eventually be able to think at the required level or do a certain task by themselves. However, the ultimate aim of the concept implies the fact that the learner (having learnt through scaffolding framework) has to work/learn independently without any support.

## 2. Significance of the study

The effectiveness of learner scaffolding among government college students is discussed

primarily in the study. A study making use of the said concept (scaffolding framework) has not been done among the government college students of Thanjavur. ESL learners studying in government colleges have not been familiar with this type of experiment previously. Therefore, this study concentrates on government college students who come from rural background and it attempts to help and improve their reading comprehension in L2 through scaffolding framework.

### **3. Students Profile**

This study involved a group of twelve students. These 12 ESL students majoring in mathematics were selected from Rajah Serfoji Government College in Thanjavur. They were from the rural areas located nearby Thanjavur. The level of exposure with respect to English is concerned, it is below average. The said conclusion is made based on a foundation level test conducted initially to know their proficiency level for them.

### **4. Research Question**

What is the influence of Scaffolding on L2 learners with respect to students studying at the government college of Thanjavur?

### **5. Methodology**

First of all, Rajah Serfoji Government College second-year Mathematics students were met and they were briefed about the study and those who expressed their willingness were selected for the study. In order to gather basic information about each participant, they were given student profile cards. (Roll numbers, age, college name, branch, etc.) After completing the same, they were informed about the contact hours that they had to attend. They were also given a baseline test. It featured both reading comprehension and a cloze passage. Their performance was then assessed. After this they were divided into two groups based on their proficiency level. In the next contact hour, the experimental group of students were given passages with a scaffolding framework (word limit 250 words) and they were asked to fill in the worksheets containing reading comprehension questions. Once they completed, their worksheets were collected for evaluation. They were given six sessions of training with the help of scaffolding framework.

Here again, the control group of students were given training on reading comprehension in a normal way (without the help of scaffolding framework) and the materials for scaffolding were



not provided to the students in the control group. They were given worksheets with passages and comprehension questions, just like a typical reading comprehension test. They were also provided with useful phrases and idioms as well as a glossary list. They had plenty of time to complete the worksheets. After completion their worksheets were collected for evaluation.

For both groups, the testing period, conditions, and evaluation standards were same.

## 6. Criteria for evaluation

A criterion for evaluation was designed to test the reading comprehension of the target group of students. These criteria include: Understanding Specific context, Analytical ability, Vocabulary, Interpreting the text, Reading Speed, and Overall Comprehension. Each criterion was allotted with marks respectively.

Descriptive statistics were used to assess the findings of the study

## Results.

**Table 1: EXPERIMENTAL GROUP**

<b>ROLL NO</b>	<b>A* (10 marks)</b>	<b>B* (10 marks)</b>	<b>C* (10 marks)</b>	<b>D* (10 marks)</b>	<b>E* (10 marks)</b>	<b>F* (10 marks)</b>	<b>Total (60 marks)</b>
<b>23MT1721</b>	8	7	7	8	7	8	45
<b>23MT1722</b>	7	7	6	7	7	7	41
<b>23ME1832</b>	9	9	8	9	9	8	52
<b>23ME1842</b>	8	9	8	9	9	9	52
<b>23MT1704</b>	9	8	7	6	7	8	45
<b>23MT1707</b>	9	9	7	9	9	7	50

(A-Understanding specific context, B-Analytical ability, C-Vocabulary, D-Interpreting the text, E-Reading speed, F-Overall Comprehension, \*-Maximum marks-10).

**Table 2: Control Group**

ROLL NO	A* (10 marks)	B* (10 marks)	C* (10 marks)	D* (10 marks)	E* (10 marks)	F* (10 marks)	Total (60 marks)
23MT1724	4	2	6	5	2	4	23
23ME1821	2	5	3	6	4	2	22
23ME1822	2	6	4	2	2	2	18
23MT1718	3	2	5	4	3	3	20
23MT1721	2	4	3	3	3	2	17
23MT1722	3	2	4	4	3	5	21

(A-Understanding specific context, B-Analytical ability, C-Vocabulary, D-Interpreting the text, E-Reading speed, F-Overall Comprehension, \*-Maximum marks-10).

## 7. Discussion

The experimental and control groups of students differ significantly from one another. Students in the experimental group performed better overall than those in the control group. It's interesting to note that students who previously used the scaffolding framework to answer the problems have done well. Their responses were consistently precise and sharp. It goes without saying that scaffolding has greatly aided their understanding of the relevant passage. Their comprehension was demonstrated by their good reading speed, while the control group's scores fell below of expectations. It is evident from this that their responses to the comprehension questions emphasized their reading comprehension deficiencies. It is crucial to remember that both groups were homogeneous in terms of their reading comprehension skills (i.e., their baseline test scores were more or less identical).

The experimental groups of students effectively related the reading comprehension passage to the questions with the use of scaffolding materials. They completed the task using two separate worksheets. There was progress on the second worksheet. When compared to the first worksheet, their responses were accurate in the second worksheet. Scaffolding framework assistance has been reduced gradually for the experimental group of learners. However, their scores were good. These

results show a clearcut influence of scaffolding as mentioned in the theory.

## **8. Limitations**

It was restricted to only a few samples and a task. More data and similar type of data environments need to be studied to generalize the concept more effectively. A homogeneous group was also used. In addition, it was restricted to a government college in the Thanjavur district.

## **9. Conclusion**

Therefore, the study's findings demonstrate that scaffolding materials do significantly improve reading comprehension among Government College students. Additionally, the research suggests that the same task, but with different modifications or combinations, could be used to enhance other skills, such as speaking (e.g., speaking task based on scaffolding material, writing assignment based on a scaffolding material).

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## Peasants on the Move: A Socio-economic Perspective on Internal Migration in India

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### Abstract:

This article examines the phenomenon of internal migration in India, with a specific focus on the socio-economic conditions and experiences of peasants. It is a proven fact that internal migration plays a vital role in shaping the socio-economic fabric of the country as peasants seek better economic opportunities and improved living conditions. The article attempts to explore the push and pull factors driving internal migration, the challenges faced by migrants, and potential solutions to address their needs. Through a comprehensive analysis of existing literature, surveys, and case studies, this study sheds light on the complexities and dynamics of internal migration among peasants in India.

**Keywords:** internal migration, peasants, India, socio-economic, push factors, pull factors, challenges, solutions.

### Introduction:

International migration plays an important role in the global socio-political set up and at the same time exercises its influence on the economic development at both local and global levels. Likewise, the internal migration also constitutes a significant aspect of any country's socio-economic landscape. In case of a country like India, with her tremendous environmental and geographical diversity, a sizable population, primarily engaged in agricultural activities, migrate from rural to urban areas or between rural regions within the country in search of better livelihood opportunities and improved living conditions. Rural peasants comprise a substantial proportion of these migrants. The phenomenon of internal migration among peasants in India has attracted increasing

attention due to its profound impact on the social and economic dynamics of both the origin and destination regions.

A combination of different push and pull factors has shaped internal migration in India. Push factors, such as poverty, landlessness, and limited employment opportunities in rural areas, propel peasants to migrate in search of economic advancement (Desai & Dubey, 2020). Additionally, factors such as agrarian distress, small and fragmented landholdings, and a lack of access to credit and resources contribute to the push for migration (Chandrasekhar & Ghosh, 2019).

On the other hand, there are some pull factors that entice peasants to migrate to urban areas or regions with better economic prospects. Rapid urbanisation, industrial growth, and the expansion of the service sector have created employment opportunities that attract peasants seeking better livelihoods (Deshingkar & Akter, 2009). The allure of higher wages, improved access to education and healthcare facilities, and the potential for social mobility also act as pull factors (Chandrasekhar & Ghosh, 2019).

The migration of peasants within India, besides its benefits, is not without its challenges. Migrants often face difficulties in accessing affordable housing, basic amenities such as clean water and sanitation, and adequate healthcare services (Bardhan et al., 2020). The informal sector, where many migrants find employment, is characterised by low wages, exploitative working conditions, and a lack of social security benefits (Kundu & Sircar, 2020). Discrimination based on ethnicity, language, and caste can further compound the challenges faced by peasant migrants (Kundu & Sircar, 2020). Understanding the complexities and dynamics of internal migration among peasants in India is crucial for devising effective policies and interventions to address their needs. By examining the push and pull factors, challenges faced by migrants, and potential solutions, this study aims to contribute to a comprehensive understanding of internal migration in India and its implications for socioeconomic development.

### **Internal Migration in India:**

Internal migration in India has been a significant phenomenon, with a substantial number of internal migrants seeking better economic opportunities and improved living conditions. According to the World Bank (2020), in 2020, India was estimated to have approximately 139 million internal migrants, highlighting the scale and importance of this movement within the country. The drivers for internal migration in India are multifaceted. Economic disparities and a

lack of employment opportunities in rural areas act as significant push factors, compelling peasants to migrate in search of better livelihood prospects (Desai & Dubey, 2020). Poverty, often intertwined with these disparities, is a crucial motivating factor that motivates individuals and families to seek economic improvement through migration.

Moreover, natural disasters and social conflicts also contribute to the push for internal migration among peasants in India. Disasters such as droughts and floods can devastate agricultural productivity, making it difficult for peasants to sustain their livelihoods in rural areas and forcing them to migrate to more secure regions (World Bank, 2020). Social conflicts, including caste-based discrimination and land disputes, can further exacerbate the need for migration as peasants seek safer and more inclusive communities.

Conversely, various pull factors attract peasants to urban and peri-urban areas in India. Urbanisation and industrial growth have created employment opportunities in sectors such as manufacturing, construction, and services, which offer higher wages and better prospects for economic advancement (Desai & Dubey, 2020). The allure of wage differentials between rural and urban areas acts as a strong incentive for peasants to migrate as they seek to improve their income and standard of living.

In addition to economic opportunities, access to better education and healthcare facilities is another significant factor driving internal migration. Urban and peri-urban areas often provide improved infrastructure and services, including schools and healthcare centres, which are crucial for the well-being and future prospects of migrant families (Desai & Dubey, 2020).

Understanding the push and pull factors behind internal migration in India is essential for formulating effective policies and interventions that address the needs of peasant migrants and facilitate sustainable development. By considering these factors, policymakers can design strategies that tackle the root causes of migration, promote inclusive growth in rural areas, and ensure equitable access to opportunities and services across the country.

### **Push Factors for Internal Migration:**

Push factors play a crucial role in driving internal migration among peasants in India. These factors encompass a range of economic, environmental, and social conditions that prompt individuals and families to leave their rural areas of origin and seek opportunities elsewhere. Poverty and a lack of employment opportunities in rural areas act as significant push factors for internal migration. The

limited availability of viable livelihood options in agriculture, coupled with the prevalence of poverty in rural communities, pushes peasants to migrate in search of better economic prospects (Chandrasekhar & Ghosh, 2019). The need to escape persistent poverty and improve their living standards drives many peasants to move to urban and peri-urban areas.

Another contributing factor to internal migration is the issue of small and fragmented landholdings. In India, landholdings often become increasingly fragmented over generations due to inheritance laws and population growth, resulting in diminishing returns from agriculture (Chandrasekhar & Ghosh, 2019). This fragmentation reduces the income potential of agricultural activities and creates a push for peasants to seek alternative sources of income in urban areas.

Agrarian distress is another significant push factor driving internal migration among peasants. Factors such as declining agricultural productivity, water scarcity, and rising input costs contribute to the overall distress in rural areas (Chandrasekhar & Ghosh, 2019). These challenges make it increasingly difficult for peasants to sustain their livelihoods solely through agriculture, prompting them to migrate in search of more stable and diversified economic opportunities. Limited access to credit and resources also serves as a push factor for internal migration. Peasants facing financial constraints find it challenging to invest in their agricultural activities or start alternative income-generating ventures. The lack of access to credit and resources further restricts their ability to improve their living conditions, pushing them towards migration in pursuit of better opportunities (Chandrasekhar & Ghosh, 2019).

Moreover, natural disasters, such as droughts and floods, often devastate rural communities and agricultural productivity, forcing peasants to migrate as a means of survival. These disasters can destroy crops, damage infrastructure, and disrupt the local economy, leaving peasants with no option but to seek more secure and resilient regions (Unnikrishnan, 2017). In addition to environmental factors, social conflicts and caste-based discrimination contribute to the push for internal migration among peasants. Social tensions, land disputes, and discriminatory practises create an inhospitable environment for marginalised communities, compelling them to migrate to escape oppression and seek better social integration (Unnikrishnan, 2017).

Understanding these push factors is essential for policymakers and stakeholders to develop targeted interventions that address the underlying causes of migration and create opportunities for sustainable development in rural areas.

### **Challenges Faced by Peasant Migrants:**

External migration poses significant challenges for peasant migrants, encompassing various aspects such as housing, access to basic amenities, working conditions, social integration, discrimination, and limited access to education and social security benefits.

One of the primary challenges faced by peasant migrants is the lack of affordable housing and inadequate access to basic amenities. Bardhan et al. (2020) have highlighted that many migrant workers struggle to find suitable and affordable housing options in urban areas. This often leads to overcrowding, substandard living conditions, and a lack of access to clean water, sanitation facilities, and healthcare services. These challenges not only affect the migrants' quality of life but also pose health risks and increase their vulnerability to diseases. Peasant migrants frequently face issues like exploitation, low pay and unfavourable working conditions in the informal sector. Kundu and Sircar (2020) emphasise that migrant workers often encounter exploitation by employers who take advantage of their vulnerable status. This exploitation can manifest in the form of long working hours, meagre wages, a lack of job security, and unsafe working environments. These factors contribute to the perpetuation of poverty and prevent upward mobility for peasant migrants.

Social integration and discrimination based on factors such as ethnicity, language, and caste further compound the challenges faced by peasant migrants. Kundu and Sircar (2020) noted that migrants often face social exclusion and marginalisation, which hinders their integration into local communities. Discrimination can lead to limited access to social networks, reduced job opportunities, and exclusion from essential services. These factors perpetuate a cycle of inequality and hinder the social and economic advancement of peasant migrants.

Limited access to education and social security benefits also exacerbates the vulnerability of peasant migrants. Without adequate access to education, migrant children face barriers to quality schooling and suffer from interrupted education due to frequent mobility (Kundu & Sircar, 2020). This limits their opportunities for skill development and future employment prospects. Moreover, the absence of social security benefits, such as health insurance, pension plans, and unemployment benefits, leaves peasant migrants financially exposed during emergencies and old age.

Peasant migrants face multiple challenges when migrating internally. The lack of affordable housing, inadequate access to basic amenities, and exploitation in the informal sector, social



integration issues, discrimination, and limited access to education and social security benefits contribute to their vulnerability and hinder their socio-economic progress. Addressing these challenges requires comprehensive policies and interventions that prioritise affordable housing, improved access to basic amenities, fair working conditions, social integration, and equal opportunities for education and social security.

**Potential Solutions and Policy Interventions:** Addressing the challenges faced by peasant migrants necessitates a comprehensive approach that includes government policies, institutional mechanisms, and grassroots initiatives. Several potential solutions and policy interventions can be implemented to alleviate the hardships experienced by migrant populations.

One crucial aspect is the strengthening of rural infrastructure and the promotion of sustainable agriculture. By investing in rural infrastructure development, such as roads, electricity, irrigation facilities, and market linkages, the government can create employment opportunities in rural areas (Government of India, 2017). This approach aims to reduce migration pressure by improving living conditions and providing income-generating activities in rural communities. Additionally, promoting sustainable agricultural practises, such as organic farming and agro-ecology, can enhance productivity and income levels in rural areas, making them more attractive for potential migrants.

Enhancing social protection measures is another vital strategy to mitigate the vulnerabilities faced by migrant populations. Srivastava and Sasikumar (2019) emphasise the importance of providing comprehensive social protection, including access to healthcare and education, for migrant workers. Establishing mobile health clinics, facilitating health insurance schemes, and ensuring affordable and quality education for migrant children can help address their specific needs. These measures contribute to improving the overall well-being and socio-economic status of peasant migrants.

Initiatives to promote skill development, vocational training, and entrepreneurship can play a significant role in empowering migrant workers and enhancing their employability. Government programmes and collaborations with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) can provide training opportunities in various sectors, including construction, manufacturing, hospitality, and service industries. Such initiatives enable migrant workers to acquire new skills, improve their

earning potential, and gain access to better job opportunities both in their home regions and at their destination locations.

Furthermore, fostering partnerships between government bodies, civil society organisations, and private enterprises can facilitate the implementation of comprehensive solutions. Collaboration among these stakeholders can lead to the development of integrated programmes that address the specific needs and challenges of peasant migrants. These initiatives may include providing counselling and legal support services, establishing helplines and grievance redressal mechanisms, and organising awareness campaigns to combat discrimination and promote social integration. It is important to note that the effectiveness of these potential solutions and policy interventions depends on their implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. Continuous assessment and feedback mechanisms can help identify gaps and refine strategies to ensure their long-term sustainability and positive impact on peasant migrants.

### **Conclusion:**

In conclusion, a combination of push and pull factors influence internal migration among Indian peasants, reflecting their aspirations for better living standards and livelihoods. However, the journey of peasant migrants is fraught with challenges across various domains, including housing, access to basic amenities, working conditions, and social integration.

To tackle these challenges effectively, a multi-faceted approach is necessary, combining policy interventions and grassroots initiatives. Strengthening rural infrastructure, such as roads, electricity, irrigation, and market linkages, can create employment opportunities in rural areas, reducing the pressure for migration. Concurrently, implementing social protection measures is crucial to mitigating the vulnerabilities faced by migrant populations. This includes ensuring access to healthcare and education, which address their specific needs and contribute to their overall well-being and socio-economic status.

Moreover, promoting skill development, vocational training, and entrepreneurship empowers peasant migrants by enhancing their employability and expanding job opportunities. Collaboration among government bodies, civil society organisations, and private enterprises is essential to implementing comprehensive solutions tailored to the unique challenges faced by peasant migrants. It is crucial to continuously assess and refine these initiatives through monitoring and evaluation to ensure their long-term sustainability and positive impact.

By understanding and addressing the needs of peasant migrants, India can harness the potential of internal migration as a driver for inclusive and sustainable development. By creating an enabling environment that provides opportunities for improved livelihoods, access to basic amenities, and social integration, India can maximise the benefits of internal migration while ensuring the well-being and socio-economic advancement of its peasant migrant population.

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## Exploring Mobile-Assisted Language Learning

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### Abstract

This independent study explores and establishes a synthesized overview of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning as a definitive medium of language acquisition in the digital age. This thematic paper aims to explore the following: 1) The theoretical frameworks that inform the pedagogy of MALL 2) examine the characteristics of MALL, 3) the attitudes towards MALL, and 4) the challenges of MALL implementation in the context of higher education. This independent study used a literature review to explore the aforementioned research goals and found the following. The theoretical frameworks that inform the pedagogy of MALL are the Constructivist Theory, wherein educators play the role of an active facilitator of learning, while learners take on constructing active knowledge through their volition. Characteristics of MALL were informed via the Tripartite Model of Attitudes, which explored attitude formation, alongside the Technology Acceptance Model, which examines how users interact with and adopt new technologies. It was found that attitudes towards MALL have been positive, but some concerns have arisen towards its effectiveness, especially in educational contexts lacking certain resources. From the classroom level to the institutional level, MALL has received a broad range of support but is met with significant obstacles that prevent equitable implementation. Students' inability to obtain a MALL-based device, internet connectivity, and the lack of appropriate teacher training present a barrier to full acceptance. MALL-based education should account for different languages, writing systems, and cultural contexts. Furthermore, new technologies have led to concerns with data protection, privacy, ethics, and transparency. Data protection laws need to be codified to ensure data collection fully complies with ethical standards. Crucially, it must be noted that the biases of Large Language Models and AI-based learning systems can be traced back to the datasets they use. This paper finds that utilizing datasets that do not account for diverse linguistic backgrounds may lead to unfair assumptions in a model's output. In turn, this exacerbates inequalities for users that do not belong to the linguistic majority.

**Keywords:** Attitudes, MALL, Mobile Assisted Language Learning, International University, International Students

## Theoretical Frameworks

Mobile Assisted Language Learning is a medium of instruction supporting language acquisition beyond a traditional classroom setting. One of its primary characteristics is portability, which is demonstrable through the ability by students to access classroom materials at anytime and anywhere. Kukulska-Hulme & Shield (2008) observed that initially, MALL was used to deliver content to learners, with some commonly cited formats including vocabulary lists and quizzes. However, it must be noted that new developments in language learning have revealed a strong need for activities that include a combination of interactivity and collaboration, specifically in areas of language learning that involve practicing speaking and listening.

Presently, creating and implementing these activities in a MALL-based context is a major challenge that affects both formal and informal learning. Kukulska-Hulme & Shield (2008) note that key concerns include user engagement as well as effective integration of technology to support language learners. The authors observed during their research that the mobility provided by mobile devices has proven to enhance motivation by enabling students to retain more control over their language learning journey and building community despite geographical separation. Currently, the trajectory of MALL is presently moving towards social, interactive, and learner-centric features. Nevertheless, each of these proposed features presents challenges within a pedagogical and technological context.

This article establishes a synthesized overview of MALL that explores the pedagogical essence of MALL, the characteristics that define MALL, the advantages of MALL, attitudes towards MALL, and the challenges that MALL faces from a higher educational context.

This paper positions the Constructivist Theory as one of the primary theoretical frameworks necessary for analyzing the pedagogy of MALL. Szabo and Csépes (2022) explore its efficacy in their own thematic paper, which examines this from the context of digital learning environments. This exploration by the authors highlight constructivism's emphasis on the active creation of knowledge through the efforts of learners, which contrasts with passively receiving information. This type of approach is representative of a move from the familiar teacher-centered methodologies and into a learner-focused approach. The characteristics of this approach also emphasize inquiry-based learning, wherein students are encouraged to inquire, ask questions, and develop an understanding by engaging with meaningful contexts. Szabó and Csépes (2022) also viewed their thematic paper alongside a model known as the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), which measures how people interact with and adopt technology, as well as Communicative Language Theory (CLT).

The authors emphasized that meaningful experiences are best supported by real life experiences and contexts, citing Bax (2003, as cited in Szabó and Csépes, 2022), who advocates for context-based approaches that account for situational factors to enhance language learning. Integration of CALL, TELL, and MALL facilitates the Constructivist approach via student-centered platforms promoting autonomy, real-world relevance, and interactivity. Nevertheless, the authors point to the limited empirical research on the effectiveness of these digital tools from a

constructivist framework and advise further studies be conducted.

While Constructivism emphasizes the observation of emerging learner behaviors, the following theory, known as the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), explores and predicts whether people will adapt a form of technology. This model was originally conceptualized by Fred Davis (1989) and served as the basis of a modified TAM created by Kim and Lee (2016). The original TAM had two components: Perceived Usefulness (PU) and Perceived Ease of Use (PE), which together measured how useful a person thought a new technology system was and whether it was easy to familiarize themselves with it without requiring extensive training. It was noted by the authors that both PU and PE were ultimately influenced by external factors that affected a person's overall intentionality. TAM is contrasted by the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), which was explored by Al Arif et al. (2022). Whereas TAM used only two variables for predicting technology acceptance, the UTAUT made use of four. Performance Expectancy (PE) and Effort Expectancy (EE) had a notable overlap with TAM's Perceived Usefulness (PU) and Perceived Ease of Use (PE). Al Arif et al. (2022) explained that PE is a variable that examines a user's degrees of belief in a new system, and in particular, how that system helps them achieve their performance-based goals. Meanwhile, Effort Expectancy (EE) examined if a user found the new system convenient to use, which is a major factor to adopting new forms of technology. UTAUT's similarities with TAM end here, and it instead introduces two new variables for its predictions. A social factor, which is covered by Social Influence (SI), and Facilitating Conditions (FC). The authors explain that SI examined how a person's social circle could be a crucial factor into influencing and ultimately convincing them to adopt a new form of technology. This is somewhat complemented by FC, which examines support for a new technology at both the organizational and the infrastructural level. Together, all four variables provide a degree of depth predictions compared to the two factors used by TAM.

Computer-Assisted Language Learning is the next theoretical framework, which is a crucial part of MALL's history. Mirani et al. (2019) explored CALL in their study and were able to explain three distinct periods, and the key characteristics that defined them. For instance, the CALL used during the 1950s and 1970s had behaviorist influences, establishing the relationship of computers as a tutor in learning. The activity systems used by CALL at this time were focused drills, vocabulary and grammar, as well as text translation. In contrast, the CALL of the 1980s transitioned into what Mirani et al. (2019) refer to as "Communicative CALL." The role of CALL shifted into that of a motivational agent for activities pertaining to writing and conversation, as well as games and promoting critical thinking.

Once again, the authors followed the evolution of CALL into the 21st Century, where it shifted focus into what they refer to as "Interactive CALL." Here, the focus was emphasized upon the sustainment of students and their learning technologies. The four language learning skills were emphasized: Listening, speaking, reading and writing. Mirani et al. (2019) noted that CALL of this time existed at a time when the World Wide Web and multimedia learning resources played increasingly prominent roles in the language learning space. However, CALL's challenges are similar to Mobile-Assisted Language Learning, broadly mapped out into personal, pedagogical, and technical challenges.



This theoretical exploration of MALL culminates with an examination of the Noticing Hypothesis, which establishes the suitability of certain frameworks into a digital language-learning context. Conceptualized by Richard Schmidt in 1990, this framework originated from Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and emphasizes the importance of attention and awareness in the student's learning process. Ronald P. Leow (2019) explained that at its core, the Noticing Hypothesis puts forward the notion that students possess a limited capacity in language processing and are not capable of addressing every language input they encounter. Leow (2019) further explains that learners can transform a language input into a language intake by making the conscious effort to notice a linguistic feature in their target language. He brings forth two points of consideration. Although considered to be a low-level form of awareness, noticing is important for a language intake to occur. Subsequently, its higher state of awareness, known as understanding, requires a combination of analysis and hypothesis testing. He notes that the role of understanding in language acquisition is contrasted by its facilitation of deeper language processing and learning.

This theory was subsequently applied by Kukulska-Hulme and Bull (2009) in the context of MALL, arguing for the unique suitability of mobile devices in facilitating noticing and putting forward the following methods to encourage it. Explicit recordings were the first method put forward, which is referred to as a modernized adaptation of language learning diaries. A language learner can use their device to capture examples of a language feature in the real world and on the spot, via texts and voice input. This can be further augmented by the suggested systematic tagging, a concept that entails rigorous categorization of recorded language features for students, educators, and researchers to explore and recall at a later time. Eventually, Kukulska-Hulme and Bull (2009) forward that systematic tagging would pave the way for the creation of what they refer to as an Open Language Model (OLM), which is intended to enable language learners to reflect on their language learning experiences. Once compared with an expert model, this would augment their understanding when they notice gaps in their own language learning.

### **Characteristics of MALL**

Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) establishes a learner-centric platform promoting and facilitating independent study and access to relevant, real-world materials. This approach to language learning is affirmed by Gulati (2008); Judd & Cropper (2010); Mompean (2010); and Yang (2012), as cited in Lu (2023), who underscore that authenticity is attained through resources that bridge classroom content with real-life contexts. These include voice recordings of native speakers and related media. Personalization is another key characteristic of MALL, which (Miangah & Nezarat, 2012; Yu, 2012, as cited in Lu, 2023) state is a facilitator for learners to choose when, where, and how they desire to conduct their studies and adapt their study materials according to their academic needs.

This medium's ubiquity and portability grant a unique leverage to language learners, which Kukulska-Hulme & Shield (2007) and Ozdamli & Cavus (2011), as cited in Lu (2023), noted as elements necessary to sustain and facilitate real time access. Miangah & Nezarat (2012, as cited in Lu, 2023) observed that MALL's flexibility accommodates a diverse range of learner preferences

and schedules. While Kukulska-Hulme (2010) and Nordin, Embi, & Yunus (2010, as cited in Lu, 2023) noted that it also supported formal and informal learning, which in turn fostered lifelong learning. Collectively, these characteristics and features promote an effective form of language learning through varied and accessible experiences. This was acknowledged by Cheon, Lee, Crooks, & Song, 2012; Gilgen, 2005; Chinnery, 2006; and Kukulska-Hulme, 2010, 2012, as cited in Lu, 2023.

Kukuluska-Hulme (2013) explored mobile technologies and their impact on language, emphasizing Mobile Assisted Language Learning. She defines MALL as using mobile devices and wireless technologies as a facilitator and enabler of learning beyond a traditional classroom context and confirms that its core characteristics are its portability, accessibility, and personalization. Furthermore, social connectivity is mentioned as a key component and highlights MALL as a collaborative medium. Therefore, it can be described that MALL is an informal, active, and incidental channel for learning a language.

Kukulska-Hulme (2013) explores MALL's shift from a singular focus into acquiring language skills, noting that it has shifted into the acquisition of complementary skills such as cross-cultural communication and self-reliance. She advocates for the recognition of learner agency and informal knowledge acquisition when designing MALL-based experiences. With rapid advancements in technology, new challenges and opportunities have also arisen for language learners, which include curating their diverse selection of learning resources, adapting to wearables, and managing their online identities. The author underscores that educators and policymakers can support MALL by implementing a learner-centered approach. Authentic contexts, informal learning approaches, professional development for teachers, and promoting digital literacy for learners are among her suggestions. She concludes that a digitally literate and adaptive learner can better survive in an increasingly mobile and interconnected world.

### **Advantages of MALL in English Teaching**

Martinez et al. (2025), documented MALL's transformation of English language learning in higher education, placing a spotlight on the following aspects in their study. Improvement of vocabulary and the four language learning components of listening and speaking, as well as reading and writing, which are critical for attaining language competency. The authors note in their findings the increased motivation of students, their overall engagement, and their independence. However, Martinez et al. (2025) noted that this method of learning faces pedagogical, technical, and institutional hurdles to proper implementation, requiring a strong support system at an institutional level and proper resource allocation. The authors point to MALL's potential to promote digital literacy and lifelong learning, arguing that it presents a strong case for continuous study and innovation.

MALL has been used to improve specific language learning aspects. In a quasi-experimental study by Phetsut and Waemusa (2022), a MALL-based intervention was conducted to improve the speaking accuracy of Thai EFL learners across 30 secondary schools in the country. Their study contained five speaking tasks implemented via WhatsApp and measured their participants' oral accuracy based on the frequency of error-free clauses they created. The study's



success also included the use of structured scaffolding and helped identify effective strategies for oral accuracy. The eight steps used in their WhatsApp intervention began as simple prompts for repetition and progressed into more explicit corrections, with students who struggled in the intervention requiring further scaffolding. Learners with advanced language skills improved through prompts.

Asynchronous learning and real-time feedback were utilized. Students had reduced speaking anxiety when tasked with submitting recordings of their voice and had the added benefit of receiving timely feedback from their teachers. However, Phetsut & Waemusa (2022) saw that there was a marked decline in student-teacher interactions during the five weeks of their study, which suggested to them that the students had attained a degree of self-reliance in their studies. Student reception to their MALL-based approach was positive, but certain strategies were favored. Text-based feedback gave students the time to review and perform corrections at their own pace, complemented by multimodal learning resources like videos, sentence examples, and pronunciation guides. It was indicated in the study that one feature the students appreciated was being able to create another recording and edit their response before submitting, which helped them reduce their anxiety. The authors note that oral feedback was the least preferred strategy. Some students found that it was difficult to use as a reference. Additionally, the structured scaffolding overwhelmed some of the students, especially when they were tasked to perform corrections multiple times. Meanwhile, internet connectivity was an occasional issue and presented a barrier for students when it was time to upload their voice recordings. The authors showcased WhatsApp's flexibility and effectiveness as a platform for learning and highlighted the preferred and least preferred methods of feedback their participants preferred.

Gamification is another characteristic of MALL explored by this paper. Pingmuang and Koranakeej (2022) introduced these gamification elements through their MALL-based app, which was designed with a task-based approach. The goal of the authors was to enhance the writing competence of lower secondary EFL students in Thailand. The authors clarified the three goals they desired to achieve:

1. Identifying the needs of learners and experiences through a survey of 665 students and five teachers.
2. Designing and developing the study's MALL application as well as writing tasks.
3. Implementing their writing-enhancement intervention on 35 selected students for eight weeks.

The entire process was conducted and achieved through a task spanning three phases: a pre-task phase, a core task-process, and a post-task. Their intervention focused on the key writing stages of topic exploration, idea drafting, theme selection, an editing task, the reviewing of submissions, and a final conclusion of their findings. Although the task faced some time management challenges, Pingmuang and Koranakeej's (2022) task was ultimately well-received and demonstrated MALL's capacity to enhance writing competencies.

Similarly, Khlaisang and Sukavatee (2023) validated MALL's utility during their study involving the language learning application MALLIE, which was used to enhance the English

communication skills (ELCS) of students in higher education. This application was well received overall by their student participants, who perceived to be highly useful and easy to use. As a tool intended to facilitate language acquisition, MALLIE integrated a Facebook messenger chatbot and an iReview webpage. The app and its associated tools focused upon interactive learning through vocabulary and grammar exercises. Additionally, the speaking and listening skills of the students were developed through creating vlogs. Khlaisang and Sukavatee (2023) illustrated the key value of technology integration in modern language education, pointing to the COVID-19 pandemic as a case study that led to a need for flexible and accessible digital solutions.

MALL's evolution has been previously addressed by Philip Hubbard and Glenn Stockwell (2013), both of whom proposed a set of ten principles acting as guidelines for the integration of mobile devices and tasks in language learning. The authors formed their ten principles by examining Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL), as well as Mobile Learning (ML); two fields which are related to MALL. From here, the authors drew upon their exploration of all three fields and devised a framework of principles to guide educators, students, and stakeholders.

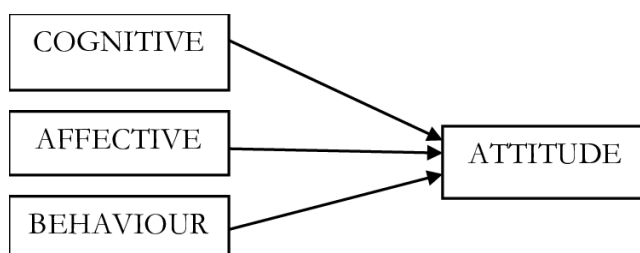
Stockwell and Hubbard's (2013) ten principles can be broadly categorized into three areas: the physical traits of the device, the design of the pedagogy, and the implementation. The first category pertains to the nature of the device itself, which includes portability, learning on the go, social connectivity, in which the devices become tools for interaction; individualization, wherein students are empowered to personalize their learning; authenticity, where the use of real-world language is emphasized; and context sensitivity; which uses location to provide relevant learning tasks. The secondary category is concerned with the design of learner activities, and these encompass using push and pull strategies in content delivery, providing an educational scaffolding to students as they learn, and applying multi-modal content from a wide variety of formats. The final category explores the overall implementation of MALL strategies and highlights the importance of training learners, as well as giving careful consideration when implementing MALL into existing curricula. Stockwell & Hubbard (2013) conclude that their principles were conceptualized as an attempt to address MALL implementation in education, which they note is an increasingly complex matter. Furthermore, they also provide the caveat that the ten principles should be treated as points of consideration when implementing MALL in existing criteria, rather than as a full solution.

### **Attitudes towards MALL**

The Multicomponent Framework of Attitudes was conceptualized by Haddock & Maio (2004, p. 36), which was in turn adapted from the Tripartite Model of Attitudes created by Baker (1992). The authors discussed the means to measure these categories, during which they proposed the use of tools such as Likert scales and factor analysis, while highlighting some of the challenges faced when attempting to measure attitudes. Some of these challenges include social desirability bias (in which people respond based on societal expectations rather than through their beliefs and experiences) as well as research influence.

This diagram comprises three components, and together, all three form the multicomponent framework conceptualized by the authors. The first attitudinal component is the cognitive component, which includes the beliefs and thoughts of a person about a particular subject, such as learning a language. The second attitudinal component is the affective component, which pertains to the feelings and emotions towards this particular subject, and finally, the conative (or behavioral) component covers a person's intentions and behaviors towards that particular subject. Haddock & Maio's (2004) diagram is a framework that definitively illustrates the formation of attitudes through its three constituent parts, highlighting the dynamic interaction between these core components, and suggesting how a person's attitude can be maintained or change over time.

*Figure 1 The Multicomponent Model of Attitudes (adapted from Baker, 1992)*



Implementing MALL hinges upon measurable perspectives, which show the necessity of frameworks such as the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). This model was used by Afshari et al. (2013) to investigate the attitudes of university students towards CALL implementation at the University of Malaya. The data they collected from the ten students identified key factors that influence technology acceptance. The findings revealed that students generally held a moderate attitude towards CALL, but Perceived Usefulness (PU), Perceived Ease of Use (PEU), and Subjective Norms (SN) were invaluable predictors for these attitudes. In essence, the students' perceptions of the technology's overall usefulness, its user-friendliness, combined with the social influences of their peers and instructors, ultimately determine their willingness to adopt MALL (Afshari et al., 2013).

Beyond the specified predictors, the willingness of students to adopt MALL is influenced by their access to the technology, prior experiences and motivations towards language learning. The study calls to attention that enhancing both Perceived Usefulness and Ease of Use combined with a supportive social system will create positive influence towards students' acceptance of MALL. It can be implied that effectively integrating MALL and language education requires prioritizing clear and demonstrable benefits, user-friendly learning platforms, and actively cultivating the necessary social support to increase both motivation and positive perceptions

TAM and similar are ideal frameworks for quantifying sentiments towards the introduction of new instructional mediums, further exploration must be conducted into the cultural dimension to account for a clearer picture of language learning. Mohammadi and Shirkamar (2018) address this gap in a related study, wherein their primary focus was the examination of attitudes by students and teachers across a broad range of cultural contexts within developing countries. Their goal was

to explore and validate the efficacy of MALL across cultures.

Examining MALL from a cultural context, the authors expressed that MALL must be enhanced for specific aspects of language, specifically listening and speaking. Mohammadi et al. (2018) additionally suggest exploring the suitability of MALL through the writing systems of other languages, providing Arabic, Persian, and Chinese as examples. The authors investigated educational systems and cultural attitudes. Alongside individual differences and learning references, these factors were established by the authors as conditions that needed to be satisfied to implement MALL successfully.

In addition to exploring attitudes across cultural contexts, the direct applicability of MALL has been explored in Thai higher education. Anuhayong (2019) conducted a study in which his intent was to gain an understanding of the perspectives of students toward MALL-implementation at the Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology. The research conclusively found an overwhelmingly positive reception towards MALL and its related exercises. Subsequently, the student participants provided suggestions to further optimize MALL-based learning in their university, particularly the use of dictionary applications (referred to as English Mobile Dictionaries) into their learning systems. The students held the belief that integrating these applications would enhance their language learning.

Furthermore, Anuhayong (2019) determined that his student participants focused on several key aspects of language learning, namely: pronunciation, grammar, and acquiring new vocabulary. These particular aspects were seen as necessary by the students, who expressed that being able to use them in a variety of contexts as important to their language learning journey. The author's study discussed that while both students and instructors had positive sentiments towards MALL, it is important to design tasks that are user-friendly, culturally sensitive, and engaging.

### **Challenges of MALL Implementation**

It has been established that MALL faces hurdles in its implementation from several factors. This section will explore some of these challenges faced by learners in their language learning journey, educators using MALL in their curricula, and the findings of researchers in this field.

This was explored by Jie Fang (2025) in her systematic literature review, specifically under the themes of acceptance, readiness, and challenges associated with MALL. The author examined 49 studies published between 2013 and 2022 that were selected for review and highlight the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) as key examples for understanding user acceptance and engagement. The author acknowledges that language learners and other users generally have a positive attitude towards MALL, and many possess sufficient skills and experience with mobile devices. The benefits of MALL also extend to (and include) pedagogical and psychological advantages. Reducing anxiety and promoting collaborative learning have been described as other key examples.

However, Fang (2025) has identified common challenges. Limited device access has been a consistent theme in her findings, with other concerns such as health and privacy being mentioned. Some usability issues and other specific difficulties were discovered pertaining to practical contexts, but these roles pertain to medical and translation contexts. Drawing attention to these barriers, Fang (2025) indicates that they hindered effective implementation as well as user engagement. Consideration of diverse user needs and user-friendly designs should be prioritized, alongside a supporting infrastructure to effect the necessary changes. Addressing these challenges may enhance the overall effectiveness of MALL across educational and professional settings.

Some of the challenges explored by Fang (2025) can be found in the following study, which focuses on a Thai higher educational context. Thai higher education has placed an emphasis on integrating digital tools for English language learning. Digital learning platforms such as MALL have proven flexible and engaging, especially for promoting autonomous learning experiences. The benefits provided by these digital learning platforms are challenged by existing limitations. San-ngiamwibool & Mounggam (2025) explore these limitations via an analysis of 71 texts published from 2015-2023.

National and institutional support for digital education has grown, but the authors have noted that there is a marked disparity in the allocation of resources to support digital education. In particular, the authors found that the clarity of policies intended to facilitate this education remains inconsistent. Conversely, San-ngiamwibool & Mounggam (2025) highlighted that institutions with successful digital education policies have implemented the following actions. One of the first key policies mentioned was investment in infrastructure, which would provide the necessary support to set up and maintain these policies. Training teaching staff was also another key policy, as it enabled educators to handle digitized learning, along with inclusive policies that allowed further equity among the student body.

Nevertheless, the authors asserted a need for further clarity in institutional policies, readying the faculty, and student motivations to prepare for the use of these digital tools. Global advancements have provided significant research data, but the authors concede that research in policymaking and implementation pertaining to Thailand remains limited. San-ngiamwibool & Mounggam (2025) also found other key barriers in the form of resistance to digital learning from undertrained faculty, a digital divide that affected students with a low-income background, and common issues such as internet connectivity and limited device access. The authors asserted that these challenges be addressed through professional development and policy reforms. They recommended that a coherent policy, one sensitive to contexts that align to national goals, be implemented. These will require regular evaluation and strong institutional support, as well as ethical and methodological rigor, but will require thorough documentation.

Similarly, as new technologies are developed and implemented in the classroom, new concerns have arisen in MALL, specifically in the context of artificial intelligence and AI-powered language learning tools. Increasingly used in language learning settings, Selvam & Vallejo (2025) explored these contemporary concerns in their literature review and found the following key issues. The primary issue the authors wish to tackle is algorithmic bias and fairness, explaining that these biases arise when datasets used to train an AI model overwhelmingly represent specific linguistic patterns, accents, and their cultural contexts. Not only does this lead to discrimination

against what they term “underrepresented linguistic groups,” but it also reinforces pre-existing educational inequalities. These concerns over biases and fairness are demonstrated by an example scenario in which an AI speech recognition tool will struggle to process non-native accents, asserting that fairness must be ensured through continuous audits of biases and fairness-aware algorithms, which adjust their recommendations based on a varied set of linguistic profiles.

Beyond pedagogical and institutional concerns, data privacy concerns remain critical. Selvam & Vallejo (2025) explain that language learning models powered by AI collect significant amounts of sensitive user data, such as voice recordings, written responses, and logs recording user interactions. It is acknowledged that data is necessary to create a personalized learning experience, but the authors caution that security risks persist. Data breaches and unauthorized access may expose a learner’s personal data, especially when stored on platforms such as the Cloud, which the authors note as being vulnerable to cyberattacks. To better protect user data, the authors suggest implementing a combination of security measures. These include continuous security audits, encryption, and authentication.

Consequently, Selvam & Vallejo (2025) highlighted that informed consent and student profiling are potential issues. When tools powered by artificial intelligence gather user data, their users may not be aware and therefore unable to provide any meaningful consent. Students may lack full awareness over how their data is handled, which includes its storage, use, and processing. This lack of full awareness extends to how their data is handled, which includes how it is stored, where and how it is used, and how it is processed.

## Conclusion

To summarize, this article establishes a synthesized overview and exploration of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning. This article examined the theoretical frameworks that underpinned MALL, assessed the prevailing attitudes towards its role as a facilitator of language learning in higher education, and examined challenges to implementing MALL. Theories such as Constructivism emphasized person-to-person interactions among language learners and viewed MALL-based learning as a facilitator of this socialized learning approach. TAM and UTAUT explored and predicted how people adapted to a new technology system based on perceptual determinants. TAM’s predictive basis was on perceptions, while UTAUT expanded upon its predictions by including a social and environmental factor in its approach. Similarly, MALL’s contemporary issues were explored, from technical, pedagogical, and institutional concerns to recent issues arising from AI-powered language learning tools. Data privacy, informed consent, AI biases stemming from nonrepresentative datasets, and ethics can be addressed through a scaffolded institutional support system. Ultimately, the success of MALL depends less on the positive perceptions of a receptive student and educational body but requires support across the institutional, pedagogical, and technical levels.

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**Displacement and Identity in Upamanyu Chatterjee's *The Mammaries of the Welfare State* and *Way to Go*: A Contemporary Discourse**

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**Abstract**

The themes of identity and displacement in Upamanyu Chatterjee's novels *Way to Go* (2006) and *The Mammaries of the Welfare State* (2000) are critically examined in this paper, which provides a thorough examination of how these works speak to current issues of postcolonial identity in the context of an increasingly globalizing India. Frequently set in urban, post-independence India, Chatterjee's protagonists represent an existential crisis as they are torn between the demands of neoliberal capitalism, the complexity of modernity, and the remnants of colonialism. In the *Mammaries of the Welfare State*, Chatterjee criticizes the welfare state and its people's disenchantment with a system that promises care but frequently fosters isolation through satire and dark humour. The protagonist's profound psychological and bodily experience of displacement reflects larger socioeconomic fractures. The protagonist of *Way to Go* similarly examines questions of identity and alienation as she negotiates the gap between conventional family structures and the quickly changing metropolitan landscape. Chatterjee illustrates how modernity

has a destabilizing influence on both individual and collective identities, exposing a generation's struggle to understand their position in a society that is becoming more divided and globalized. This essay contends that Chatterjee's books illustrate how psychological and physical displacement constitute a crucial component of the contemporary Indian experience, thereby engaging with current discourses of postcolonial identity. Through his subtle, sarcastic perspective, Chatterjee examines the conflict between personal preferences, governmental institutions, and broader social factors that influence modern identity.

**Keywords:** Displacement, Identity, Postcolonialism, Urban Alienation, Globalization, neoliberal capitalism, sarcastic

## **Introduction**

In the context of postcolonial literature, the relationship between identity and displacement has emerged as a crucial lens for examining current global narratives, especially in Upamanyu Chatterjee's writings. The conversation about identity has grown more complex and contradictory as India moves out of the shadows of its colonial past and into the complexity of modernity. Chatterjee explores the existential, cultural, and psychological crises of his characters in *The Mammaries of the Welfare State* (2000) and *Way to Go* (2006) as they struggle with the conflict between the demands of neoliberal capitalism and the aspirations of the postcolonial state. These pieces highlight the revolutionary challenges facing modern Indian culture and examine how personal identity is formed and reformed within the framework of urbanization, globalization, and the remnants of coloniality. Global economic systems, national ideologies, colonial histories, and other socioeconomic influences are reflected in identity, which is not just an individual construct in the postcolonial setting. The hybridized nature of postcolonial identities is emphasized by theorist Homi K. Bhabha (1994). This idea is closely related to Chatterjee's writings, since the protagonists' sense of self is frequently trapped in a state of flux between traditional values and the demands of modernization. Chatterjee emphasizes the intricate relationship between an individual's identity and the social, political, and economic factors that contribute to a feeling of displacement while simultaneously criticizing the workings of neoliberal capitalism and the welfare state. Chatterjee parodies the Indian welfare state's unfulfilled promises in *The Mammaries*

of the Welfare State by contrasting its grandiose aspirations of protection and care with the obvious disillusionment and estrangement experienced by common people. Like many of Chatterjee's characters, the protagonist of this book undergoes a profound psychological and physical upheaval. A deep existential questioning of identity results from the feeling that the state, which was formerly seen as the defender of post-independence hope, has betrayed people. According to critic Arundhati Roy (2002), Chatterjee's use of satire and black humour highlights the paradoxes present in the postcolonial state, where the realities of systematic inequality and bureaucratic in reality the female protagonist in *Way to Go*, who negotiates the conflict between the conventional family structures and the quickly shifting social and cultural dynamics of urban India, similarly examines concerns of alienation and personal identity. As societal changes brought about by global capitalism upend social and familial expectations, Chatterjee paints a picture of a generation torn between the "old" and the "new" in this book. The protagonist's experience is representative of what anthropologist Arjun Appadurai (1996) refers to as "disjuncture's" in modernity, where traditional values and the forces of globalization are at odds more and more, resulting in a sense of fragmentation and rootlessness.

The primary protagonists in Chatterjee's novels are characterized by their feeling of estrangement from both their immediate environment and their cultural and historical heritage. Their displacement extends to the psychological and emotional sphere in addition to bodily movement. David Harvey (2005) contends that the dynamics of neoliberal capitalism, which worsen socioeconomic inequality and undermine social safety nets, are to blame for this displacement. The contradictions of globalization—how widespread poverty, alienation, and social disintegration combine with economic progress and development—are frequently faced by the protagonists of Chatterjee's works. Chatterjee's writings demonstrate how displacement is a psychological and physical state that is closely related to what it's like to live in a postcolonial, globalized world. Identity is ambiguous, shattered, and disputed in the metropolitan settings that Chatterjee's characters live in. The process of colonialism and its aftermath have a lasting effect on people's psyches, affecting how they perceive themselves and their connection with the state, as Edward Said (1978) claims in *Orientalism*. Within the framework of Chatterjee's books, the state is portrayed as a symbol of oppression and protection, providing a sense of security while also encouraging alienation. In the end, this essay makes the case that Chatterjee's investigation of

identity and relocation offers a sophisticated perspective on the modern Indian experience. His writings provide a comprehensive criticism of the factors influencing contemporary Indian identity by fusing the political and the personal, the little and the large. We are reminded by Chatterjee's cynicism and black humour that identity is a continuous negotiation between the individual and the more significant socio-political forces at work rather than a fixed or solitary concept. Identity is becoming more and more a result of displacement in the globalized world as people are tugged in different directions by the forces of global capitalism, technology, and tradition. The intricacies of these situations are not exclusive to India; they have universal resonance. As many postcolonial and developing nations face similar struggles in the wake of globalization and neoliberal reforms.

### **Displacement and Identity in Upamanyu Chatterjee's *The Mammaries of the Welfare State* and *Way to Go***

Upamanyu Chatterjee skilfully combines the themes of identity and displacement in his novels *Way to Go* (2006) and *The Mammaries of the Welfare State* (2000), illustrating the deep existential struggles his protagonists encounter while negotiating the intricacies of postcolonial India in the face of swift globalization. Chatterjee's analysis of the welfare state, neoliberal capitalism, and the lingering effects of colonialism shows how these factors undermine personal identities, especially in post-independence India's cities. By focusing on the psychological and emotional consequences of displacement, Chatterjee engages with broader debates about the destabilizing influence of modernity and globalization on personal and collective selfhood

### **Displacement as a Psychological Condition: *The Mammaries of the Welfare State***

Chatterjee depicts displacement in *The Mammaries of the Welfare State* as a profound psychological state in addition to a bodily one. The main character, an anonymous middle-class man who lives in Delhi after independence, represents a generation that has grown weary of the welfare state's promises. Chatterjee illustrates the mismatch between the individual's psyche and the socio-political structures around him through the protagonist's internal monologue and fractured narrative style. The protagonist's disenchantment with the government and his enduring sense of estrangement from a society that promises well-being yet maintains isolation are clear indicators of his relocation. In order to comprehend this displacement, Chatterjee's use of sarcasm

and black humour is essential. The protagonist's inner conflicts reflect a larger disappointment with the Indian state's lofty ideals. It is not just his community that he feels estranged from, but also his own body. The recurrent topic of physiological processes and disappointments, for example, exemplifies the protagonist's dissatisfaction with his own physicality and serves as a metaphor for his psychological fragmentation. The gap between his ambitions and his experienced reality is something he is intensely aware of as he battles the banality of his life. This is exemplified when he describes his situation: *“My body, my flesh, my skin, my bones they are not mine. They belong to the state, to the system that has bound them together and turned them into a thing I cannot control. My own hands are alien to me”* (Chatterjee, 2000, p. 54) The protagonist's alienation from his physical body a type of displacement that extends beyond spatial displacement to include a profound sense of disconnection from selfhood is poignantly highlighted in this paragraph. It highlights the mental toll of residing in a system that, despite its claims of caring, causes severe disruption and indifference.

Chatterjee's criticism of the welfare state reflects his involvement with more general postcolonial discussions concerning the inability of state institutions to live up to the ideals of independence. The protagonist's estrangement exemplifies what Aijaz Ahmad (2000) calls postcolonial countries' “structural contradictions” “contradictions that occur when the state, which is supposed to liberate and uplift, instead becomes a source of disappointment and indifference. Thus, the protagonist's experience of relocation is both personal and collective, reflecting a generation whose aspirations for a fair and just society have been shattered by the postcolonial state's dysfunctions.

### **Displacement and Alienation in *Way to Go*: The Female Protagonist's Struggle with Identity**

Through the experience of a young woman trapped between the rapidly shifting demands of contemporary urban life and conventional family expectations, Chatterjee offers an alternative perspective on displacement in *Way to Go*. The protagonist, a nameless female character, represents the hardships of a generation of women who are caught between the freedoms offered by the contemporary, globalized world and the roles that their families have assigned them. Her internal sense of self is being torn between her family's expectations and her longing for independence, which is more significant than her actual physical relocation.

The protagonist experiences alienation on her journey—alienation from society, from her family, and from herself. She has an identity crisis as she negotiates the conflict between conventional expectations and the opportunities brought forth by a globalizing world. She considers her views in one especially illuminating section:

*"I am supposed to be the good daughter, the dutiful sister, the obedient woman, but there is something in me that doesn't fit the mould. I can't go back to being the person I once was, but I don't know who I am now."* (Chatterjee, 2006, p. 112)

The psychological complexities of her displacement are revealed in this excerpt. The female protagonist in *Way to Go* is displaced by her very identity, in contrast to the protagonist in *The Mammaries of the Welfare State*, who is disenchanted with the government and society. Her effort to establish an identity outside of these limitations corresponds to the greater experience of women in a society that is undergoing fast social and cultural change. The strains of independence and familial duty produce a deep internal conflict. Modern feminist postcolonial theory contends that postcolonial countries frequently impose gendered expectations on women despite their promises of modernization and equality, and Chatterjee's depiction of the female protagonist's identity problem is consistent with this theory (Spivak, 1999). As a result, the protagonist's displacement is gendered and influenced by both global forces that challenge established conventions and societal expectations. Chatterjee illustrates the protagonist's inability to balance these conflicting identities, signifying the self-fragmentation that many Indian women experience today.

### **The Globalization of Displacement: Neoliberalism and its Discontents**

Additionally, Chatterjee's two books highlight how neoliberal capitalism affects identity and relocation. The protagonists encounter the dehumanizing consequences of a market-driven society as India's integration into the global economy grows. The alienating consequences of neoliberal economic policies, which put efficiency and profit ahead of social welfare, exacerbate the protagonist's sense of dislocation in *The Mammaries of the Welfare State*. The character's connection with the welfare state, which he perceives as a meaningless organization that provides only bureaucratic red tape in lieu of real care, is a particularly clear example of this issue. Chatterjee also criticizes how globalization affects the protagonist's sense of self in *Way to Go*.

The female protagonist grows more conscious of the contradiction between her ideals and the commercialized society around her as she is dragged into the fast-paced, consumer-driven world of the metropolitan elite. The market forces that rule her surroundings influence her sense of self, and she feels more and more cut off from both her past and her future. Neoliberal capitalism has profound human repercussions, altering not only economic but also cultural and emotional reality, as Arundhati Roy (2002) contends.

Thus, the books show how displacement is a part of broader socioeconomic institutions that influence identity rather than being solely the result of personal circumstances. The growing monetization of human relationships and identities in a neoliberal society is linked to the protagonist's alienation in *Way to Go*. The protagonist is pushed farther away from her sense of identity and belonging by the rise of individualism, where financial gain is used to gauge personal achievement

### **Identity, Displacement, and the Globalized Indian Experience**

In conclusion, Upamanyu Chatterjee's *Way to Go* and *The Mammaries of the Welfare State* present a nuanced analysis of the socio-political dynamics that influence both individual and societal identities while offering a complex depiction of identity and displacement in modern-day India. Chatterjee demonstrates how people in postcolonial nations manage the conflicts between modernity, tradition, and globalization through his investigation of psychological and emotional displacement. Both stories' protagonists, who each represent distinct aspects of a postcolonial and globalized world, serve as excellent examples of the challenges of a generation torn between opposing social and cultural forces.

This study examines Chatterjee's writings to demonstrate how, in addition to being a physical occurrence, displacement is also a psychological and emotional state influenced by the socio-political forces of globalization, neoliberal capitalism, and the welfare state. These topics are relevant outside of India and provide insights into the common struggles people encounter in a world that is becoming more interconnected and divided. Chatterjee tells a gripping story of exile through his sarcasm and black humour, highlighting the difficulties of contemporary identity in a globalized world.



## **Comparative Analysis: Upamanyu Chatterjee and Aravind Adiga on Identity and Displacement**

Through the *Mammaries of the Welfare State* and *Way to Go*, Upamanyu Chatterjee explores identity and displacement, offering a distinctive perspective on the intricacies of postcolonial Indian identity in a globalized world. Nonetheless, there are clear distinctions between Chatterjee's and his contemporary Aravind Adiga's approaches to the topics of identity, displacement, and social alienation as well as common thematic concerns when comparing their works, especially *The White Tiger* (2008). Although both authors address the consequences of neoliberalism, urban alienation, and the breakdown of conventional identities, there are notable differences between their depictions of characters and narrative strategies.

### **Themes of Displacement and Alienation**

Displacement is a major issue that both Chatterjee and Adiga explore, especially in light of metropolitan settings and the pressures of capitalism and globalization. The protagonist of Chatterjee's *The Mammaries of the Welfare State*, an anonymous middle-class guy, experiences psychological estrangement in the disjointed and bureaucratic post-independence Indian society. His disenchantment with a system that offers care but encourages isolation, as well as his estrangement from the welfare state, are reflections of a larger breakdown in society (Chatterjee, 2000, p. 54).

In a similar vein, Balram Halwai, a rural Indian man who moves to Delhi and becomes disillusioned with the corruption and exploitation he experiences, is a character in Adiga's *The White Tiger*. The themes of alienation and despair are echoed by Balram's liberation from the bonds of poverty and his subsequent moral decline. The main characters in both pieces are victims of a broader socioeconomic structure, which makes them feel even more dislocated. Despite his external luxuries, Chatterjee's protagonist has profound emotional dislocation as he struggles with the state's inability to deliver substantial assistance (Chatterjee, 2000).

While Balram rejects the old hierarchical system in favor of capitalism's promises, Adiga views his path via a survival lens, in which he literally and figuratively "kills" his former identity to embrace a new, brutally pragmatic character (Adiga, 2008, p. 237).

## Chatterjee vs. Adiga: Psychological vs. Physical Displacement

The nature of relocation that Chatterjee and Adiga depict in their novels is where they most differ from one another. The existential and psychological aspects of relocation are Chatterjee's main areas of interest. In contrast to Adiga's Balram, who literally moves from the countryside to the city, his protagonists are not physically uprooted. Rather, Chatterjee's characters undergo an internal displacement characterized by a fractured and unstable sense of self. In the *Mammaries of the Welfare State*, for example, Chatterjee's protagonist frequently muses about his incapacity to make sense of his body in relation to his surroundings, which he characterizes as becoming more and more foreign. This disjunction is exemplified when he says,

*"My body, my flesh, my skin, my bones—they are not mine. They belong to the state, to the system that has bound them together and turned them into a thing I cannot control"* (Chatterjee, 2000, p. 54).

Instead of being external, the protagonist's sense of displacement is rooted in his thoughts and how he perceives the world. This is similar to the alienation that postcolonial studies theorists like Frantz Fanon (1967) discuss, wherein colonial and postcolonial subjects have a fractured sense of self. I was born." Adiga's Balram, on the other hand, depicts a more overtly radical and tangible kind of displacement. The physical displacement that many postcolonial subjects go through when they face the harsh realities of a globalized capitalist economy is symbolized by Balram's move to Delhi. Balram's displacement shows up as a violent reclamation of power and a rejection of his previous identity, in contrast to Chatterjee's introspective protagonists. Alongside his physical relocation to the city, he undergoes a psychic metamorphosis, yet his moral decay and social ascent serve as external indicators of this metamorphosis. As he writes to the Chinese Premier in his letter *"in a darkness, and I have come to the light of the city. I have shed my old skin"* (Adiga, 2008, p. 73).

This is a more radical departure from the past, indicating his disapproval of traditional societal structures, whilst Chatterjee's characters display a more complex identity crisis

## Narrative Techniques: Humour vs. Violence

Their narrative styles represent yet another significant distinction between Chatterjee and Adiga.

In order to highlight the absurdities of postcolonial existence and provide a dispassionate assessment of the socio-political structures that influence his characters' experiences, Chatterjee frequently uses satire and black humour. This is demonstrated in *The Mammaries of the Welfare State*, where the protagonist's sarcastic reflections on the state's shortcomings inspire both laughter and hopelessness. For example, Chatterjee's portrayal of the welfare state's bureaucratic inefficiency completes with recurring forms and promises of care is both humorous and damning. Instead of using the overt violence found in Adiga's work, this conveys the protagonist's isolation through wit, creating a sense of bitter irony.

Adiga's story in *The White Tiger*, on the other hand, is far more straightforward and combative. In addition to being physical, the violence in Balram's trip is both moral and psychological. Although it is tinged with violence and guilt, Balram's choice to murder his boss and steal from him is a clear act of self-liberation. Adiga's tone is more combative, highlighting the cruelty of the structures that lead to alienation and exile. The protagonist of Chatterjee is still stuck in his disillusionment, whereas Adiga's Balram makes a decisive, violent move to get out.

### **Conclusion**

Although Chatterjee and Adiga both discuss the issue of displacement in contemporary India, they take rather different tacks. *Way to Go* and *The Mammaries of the Welfare State* by Chatterjee critically examine the shortcomings of postcolonial state institutions while concentrating on the existential and psychological effects of relocation. Because they are unable to break free from the institutions that displace them, Chatterjee's heroes continue to be trapped in their isolation.

The protagonist's moral decline and rejection of his former personality, on the other hand, represent the brutal metamorphosis required to thrive in a neoliberal, capitalist world in Adiga's *The White Tiger*, which presents a more extreme, tangible kind of displacement. Adiga chooses a blunt, brutal critique of social structures, while Chatterjee employs satire and dark humour to examine his characters' hardships.

Though their portrayals vary in tone, approach, and the extent of their protagonists' reactions to the pressures of displacement, both authors provide insightful analyses of how globalization and capitalism impact postcolonial identity. In the backdrop of modern India, Upamanyu Chatterjee's *Way to Go* and *The Mammaries of the Welfare State* provide deep insights into the intricacies of identity and displacement. Chatterjee tackles the bewildering impacts of modernity on people by

investigating postcolonial fears, urban alienation, and the psychological ramifications of neoliberalism. His writings serve as a sharp critique of the economic, social, and political changes that have characterized India since independence and its growing globalization. Chatterjee illustrates the dislocation and fragmentation his characters go through in their quest for purpose and belonging by concentrating on the relationship between personal identity and the larger frameworks of state, capitalism, and tradition. Identity is a fluid, contested realm that changes in reaction to outside forces rather than a fixed or predetermined construct in either book. The contrasting pressures of a neoliberal capitalist state, the legacy of colonialism, and the social demands of family and tradition all influence the characters in *Way to Go* and *The Mammaries of the Welfare State* as they struggle with their sense of self. Through his characters, Chatterjee demonstrates the intricacies of postcolonial identity, where individual and societal histories converge and give rise to novel existential dilemmas the protagonist in *The Mammaries of the Welfare State*, for example, feels cut off from both his body and the welfare state's unfulfilled promises. His relationship with the state, which instead of caring for him, exposes him to isolation and bureaucratic slowness, continuously erodes his sense of self. Similar to this, the female lead in *Way to Go* battles to balance her personal preferences with those of her family and society, exemplifying the conflicts between tradition and modernization that define the postcolonial state. Chatterjee's focus on psychological displacement distinguishes his writing from those of other modern writers like Aravind Adiga. The protagonists of Chatterjee exhibit an inner sense of fragmentation, in contrast to Adiga's *The White Tiger*, which depicts a more violent, physical type of displacement, personified by Balram's ruthless rejection of his past. They are unable to break free from the oppressive systems that define their life, and they continue to live in a state of alienation. Chatterjee's depiction of alienation is further distinguished by his use of satire and black humour. He presents a bittersweet picture of the contemporary Indian experience by fusing humor and critical criticism, where disenchantment is subdued by a sardonic disengagement from the very structures that oppress the protago. Through his characters' experiences of psychological displacement, Chatterjee underscores the destabilizing effects of modernity on identity. In a globalized world, where capitalist forces demand constant reinvention and the welfare state fails to offer protection, individuals are forced to navigate a labyrinth of conflicting identities. Chatterjee's works reveal that this struggle is not merely individual but collective an entire

generation caught between the promises of a modern, globalized India and the legacy of its colonial past. The protagonists' sense of self is thus shaped by forces beyond their control: a disillusioned engagement with the state, the pressures of family and tradition, and the alienating forces of capitalism and neoliberalism. In the end, Chatterjee offers a critical commentary on the postcolonial state of modern-day India through her investigation of identity and relocation. His books serve as a reminder that, in today's globalized world, the quest for identity is closely tied to the socio-political forces at work. Chatterjee offers a sophisticated perspective on how people deal with the intricacies of contemporary life in a culture characterized by injustice, alienation, and the legacy of colonialism by emphasizing the inner conflicts of his characters. His writings demonstrate the continued relevance of postcolonial discourse by demonstrating that the search for identity is still an open and continuous process, characterized by fragmentation, dislocation, and the ongoing renegotiation of selfhood in a world that is changing quickly

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## Specters and Spirits: Supernatural Elements in Mara Folk Narratives

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### Abstract

The Mara people of Northeast India and Western Myanmar have preserved a remarkably rich oral tradition where specters, spirits, and supernatural beings animate every corner of life. This article explores the supernatural dimensions of Mara myths, legends, and folktales, with special attention to the classification of spirits, their narrative functions, and the rituals of appeasement surrounding them. Through close readings of representative tales—such as the myth of Thluapa, the legend of Siarahmaino and the spirit-fish, and the cycle of Nârâ and the Syuki Hraila (were-tigers)—the study demonstrates how the Mara oral imagination negotiates questions of morality, death, love, and survival through the presence of the supernatural. Far from being mere superstitions, these stories reveal a worldview where the natural and the supernatural are inseparable, shaping cultural identity and collective memory.

**Key Words:** Mara, folk narratives, spirits, supernatural, cultural memory

### Introduction

Every culture lives with ghosts. For the Mara, a tribal community inhabiting the southern tip of Mizoram, India, and parts of the Chin Hills in Myanmar, spirits and specters were not abstract beliefs but daily companions. The forest, the river, the jhum field, and the household hearth were all inhabited by invisible presences—benevolent or malevolent—that could bring prosperity or disaster. As N. E. Parry observed in his early ethnographic account, “The Lakhers [Mara] live in constant dread of evil spirits; their whole life is shadowed by them” (350).

Yet fear was not the only response. Through stories, songs, and rituals, the Mara shaped a dynamic



relationship with their unseen neighbors. Folklore became a medium for negotiating anxieties, enforcing taboos, and expressing hopes. Specters and spirits entered the narrative world not merely as antagonists but also as teachers, lovers, companions, and guardians.

This article examines supernatural elements in Mara folk narratives, focusing on three broad genres—myth, legend, and folktale—and situates them within the cultural matrix of Mara belief. By retelling representative stories in full while also analyzing their functions, this study seeks to show how oral tradition sustains a worldview where the living and the spectral are bound together in everyday existence.

### The World of the Mara and Their Belief System

The Mara, historically known as “Lakher” or “Shendu,” are a Tibeto-Burman tribe of Mongoloid stock who migrated into their present settlement during the seventeenth century (Parry 12; Ray 53). Traditionally, the Mara practiced shifting cultivation and lived in close connection with their natural environment. Before the arrival of Christianity in the early twentieth century, their religious life was animistic, woven with rituals to appease gods, spirits, and the souls of the dead (Hlychho 2).

At the center of this spiritual cosmos stood Khazohpa or Khazoh Lythâhpa, a transcendent deity recognized even by missionaries as the closest indigenous counterpart to the Christian God. Annual pig sacrifices known as hrôpi bao were offered to Khazohpa as acts of devotion (Zohra 2). Surrounding him was a crowded pantheon: intermediary spirits (Khasôh), nature guardians (Azipa), benevolent protectors such as Zo and Lasino, and dangerous beings like the Lyurahripa, who caused illness and death.

The Mara also believed that every human carried dual spirits of good and evil, making the individual both vulnerable to possession and capable of spiritual influence. Ghosts of the dead lingered among the living, demanding ritual respect lest they become restless. In such a universe, the supernatural was not external to life but embedded in its rhythms.

### Specters and Spirits in Myth

One of the most striking Mara myths is the story of Thluapa, an orphan boy abandoned by his community. Ill-treated by villagers, Thluapa found sympathy not among humans but among the spirits of the Kaopi river falls. These spirits, known as Khasôh, taught him the secret “Dance of the Dead” (Athihpa La), a ritual reserved for the soul’s journey after death. They warned him never to reveal it, yet Thluapa’s indiscretion cost him his life.

This myth encapsulates the Mara view of spirits as ambivalent figures—both benefactors and executioners. Knowledge comes from the otherworld, but secrecy is the price of survival. For the community, the tale underscores a moral: transgressing taboos surrounding the supernatural invites destruction. At the same time, the story ennoble the orphan, making him the chosen recipient of hidden wisdom, a recurring motif in folk literature where the marginalized gain unexpected access to the sacred.

### Specters and Spirits in Legend

Perhaps the most enchanting of Mara legends is the tale of Siarahmaino, a young woman who discovered a magical fish while fetching water. When placed in her bamboo container, the fish leapt out, transforming into a handsome man who completed her household chores before slipping back into aquatic form. Gradually, Siarahmaino and the spirit-fish fell in love, and their romance provoked envy and rivalry with another woman, Nôhmeino.

This legend illustrates the porous boundary between human and supernatural realms. The fish-lover represents both abundance and danger, a liminal figure whose love defies social norms. Human-spirit unions are common in world folklore, from Japanese tales of water-serpents to Celtic selkies. In the Mara context, the story dramatizes both desire for the extraordinary and fear of its consequences. The supernatural lover is alluring precisely because he is otherworldly, yet that very difference ensures tragedy.

Another epic cycle revolves around Nârâ, son of a sorcerer, and his encounters with the Syuki Hraila—were-tigers capable of shifting between human and animal form. After inheriting magical powers, Nârâ befriends Kiathyu, a Syuki Hraila, only to discover betrayal, rivalry, and violence in

their relationship. Their duel, full of transformations and sorcery, ends with Kiathyu's defeat (K mara 21–24).

The were-tiger motif expresses the Mara's ambivalent relationship with the forest. Tigers were feared predators but also respected as embodiments of strength. By imagining them as humans in disguise, the Mara projected anxieties about trust, kinship, and hidden danger within society itself. The legend of Nârâ and Kiathyu thus operates on multiple levels: as a thrilling tale of magic, a reflection on betrayal, and a symbolic drama of human–animal boundaries.

### Specters in Folktale

Folktales often feature less exalted but equally vivid supernatural beings. Mischievous spirits like Thlahchhiepa were believed to wander at night, appearing in dreams or frightening travelers. While not as lethal as Lyurahripa, their antics served to explain sudden frights, nightmares, or illnesses without clear cause (Hlychho 83).

Other tales depict household spirits who help or hinder daily chores. Some stories even laugh at the gullibility of villagers who mistake animals for ghosts, showing that humor was an important dimension of dealing with fear. Folktales thus democratize the supernatural, bringing specters into the realm of ordinary life where they can be ridiculed, tricked, or befriended.

### Rituals, Sacrifice, and Appeasement

Supernatural narratives were inseparable from ritual practice. To live as a Mara was to constantly negotiate with unseen forces. Sacrifices of pigs, fowls, and dogs were performed not as acts of devotion but as appeasement. As R. A. Lorrain observed, the Mara were “devil appeasers rather than devil worshippers” (101).

Rituals like pana were directed to nature spirits of rivers, trees, and rocks, while grand ceremonies like hrôpi bao honored Khazohpa (Zohra 2). Spirit-mediums (lyhburpa) played a crucial role, entering trance to diagnose the cause of illness and prescribe sacrifices. In this system, sickness was not a random event but a sign of spirit displeasure, demanding negotiation through ritual.

## Symbolism and Social Meaning

At a deeper level, specters and spirits symbolized human emotions and social dilemmas. The malevolent Lyurahripa embodied fear, violence, and death, while benevolent spirits reflected love, fertility, and protection. Were-tigers dramatized the possibility of betrayal hidden beneath kinship, and spirit-lovers embodied the allure and danger of crossing boundaries.

By externalizing anxieties in narrative form, the Mara turned fear into story, chaos into meaning. Ghosts and specters regulated moral life: they punished betrayal, rewarded loyalty, and reminded the community of the unseen consequences of action. Folklore thus functioned as both entertainment and ethical instruction, a means of sustaining collective memory while coping with existential uncertainty.

## Conclusion

Specters and spirits are not marginal curiosities in Mara folklore; they are its very heart. From the tragic fate of Thluapa to the magical romance of Siarahmaino, from the duels of Nârâ and Kiathyu to the restless wanderings of Thlahchhiepa, the Mara oral tradition reveals a world where the supernatural was never far away.

These stories, preserved through oral performance, encode the community's struggle with mortality, nature, and morality. They remind us that for the Mara, the forest was not empty, rivers were not silent, and nights were never truly dark. Every place could be haunted, every act watched, every misfortune explained by unseen hands.

In studying these narratives, we not only preserve the fragile heritage of an indigenous people but also encounter the universal human need to people the unknown with meaning. Mara specters and spirits thus stand as testimony to the imaginative resilience of a community that lived, and still remembers living, in a world alive with the supernatural.

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## Narumugaiye Analysis

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### Abstract

The official love between young newly married couple has been explained in this poem.

narumagaiye - (purananooru புறநானூறு) -112,kurumthogai குறுந் தொகை -40

**Keywords:** narumugaiye famous tamil song,purananooru 112 poem,kurunthogai 40 poem, kaviperasu vairamutthu,official love,love between young couple

**Author:** kavi perarasu vairamuthu.

**Theme:** a woman and her lover opening their sincere feeling towards others

### Introduction:

The poem expresses the official love in the poem but taken verses from ancient moaning song also ancient in official love.

### Poem:

Used brilliant lyrics of Sangam literature Tamil instead of modern Tamil. The lyrics were not completely written by author but selected from various Sangam era poetry. The poem uses modern Tamil to get best feeling of the era of the situation

### Lyrics

#### Tamil lyric

நறுமுகையே நறுமுகையே  
நீயொரு நாழிகை நில்லாய்  
செங்கனி ஊறிய வாய் திறந்து  
நீயொரு திருமொழி சொல்லாய்  
அற்றைத் திங்கள் அந்நிலவில்

நெற்றிதரல நீர்வடிய  
 கொற்றப் பொய்கை ஆடியவள் நீயா  
 அற்றைத் திங்கள் அந்நிலவில்  
 நெற்றிதரல நீர்வடிய  
 கொற்றப் பொய்கை ஆடியவள் நீயா  
 திருமகனே திருமகனே  
 நீ ஒரு நாழிகைப் பாராய்  
 வெண்ணிறப் புரவியில் வந்தவனே  
 வேல்விழி மொழிகள் கேளாய்  
 அற்றைத் திங்கள் அந்நிலவில்  
 கொற்றப் பொய்கை ஆடுகையில்  
 ஒற்றை பார்வை பார்த்தவனும் நீயா  
 அற்றைத் திங்கள் அந்நிலவில்  
 கொற்றப் பொய்கை ஆடுகையில்  
 ஒற்றை பார்வை பார்த்தவனும் நீயா  
 மங்கை மான்விழி அம்புகள்  
 என் மார் துளைத்ததென்ன  
 மங்கை மான்விழி அம்புகள்  
 என் மார் துளைத்ததென்ன  
 பாண்டி நாடனைக் கண்ட என் உடல்  
 பசலை கொண்டதென்ன  
 நிலாவிலே பார்த்த வண்ணம்  
 கனாவிலே தோன்றும் இன்னும்  
 நிலாவிலே பார்த்த வண்ணம்  
 கனாவிலே தோன்றும் இன்னும்  
 இளைத்தேன் துடித்தேன் பொறுக்கவில்லை  
 இடையில் மேகலை இருக்கவில்லை  
 நறுமுகையே நறுமுகையே  
 நீயொரு நாழிகை நில்லாய்  
 செங்கனி ஊறிய வாய் திறந்து  
 நீயொரு திருமொழி சொல்லாய்  
 அற்றைத் திங்கள் அந்நிலவில்  
 கொற்றப் பொய்கை ஆடுகையில்  
 ஒற்றை பார்வை பார்த்தவனும் நீயா  
 அற்றைத் திங்கள் அந்நிலவில்  
 நெற்றிதரல நீர்வடிய  
 கொற்றப் பொய்கை ஆடியவள் நீயா  
 யாயும் யாயும் யாராகியாரோ  
 நெஞ்சில் நென்றதென்ன  
 யாயும் யாயும் யாராகியாரோ  
 நெஞ்சில் நென்றதென்ன  
 யானும் நீயும் எவ்வழி அறிதும்  
 உறவு சேர்ந்ததென்ன  
 ஒரே ஒரு தீண்டல் செய்தாய்  
 உயிர்க்கொடி பூத்ததென்ன

ஒரே ஒரு தீண்டல் செய்தாய்  
உயிர்க்கொடி பூத்ததென்ன  
செம்புலம் சேர்ந்த நீர் துளி போல்  
அம்புடை நெஞ்சம் கலந்ததென்ன  
திருமகனே திருமகனே  
நீ ஒரு நாழிகைப் பாராய்  
வெண்ணிறப் புரவியில் வந்தவனே  
வேல்விழி மொழிகள் கேளாய்  
அற்றைத் திங்கள் அந்நிலவில்  
கொற்றப் பொய்கை ஆடுகையில்  
ஒற்றை பார்வை பார்த்தவனும் நீயா  
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நெற்றிதரல நீர்வடிய  
கொற்றப் பொய்கள் ஆடியவள் நீயா  
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நீயா  
ஆ ஆஆ ஆஆஆ  
நீயா

### Tamil lyric in English

Narumugaye narumugaye nee oru naaligai nillai  
Sengani ooriya vaay thiranthu nee oru thiru mozhi sollai  
Attrai thingal annillavil netri tharala neer vadiya  
Kotra poigal aadugaiyil neeya

Thirumaganai thirumaganai nee oru naaligai paarai  
Vennira puraviyil vanthavanae vel vizhi mozhigal kellaai  
Attrai thingal annilavil kotra poigai aadugaiyil  
Otrai paarvay paarthavannum neeya

Mangai maanvizhi ambukal en maarthulaithath enna  
Paandi naadanai kanda en mannam passaley kondath enna  
Nillaavillai paartha varnum kanaavilley thondrum innum  
Illaithaen thudithaen porruka villai Idaiyil megallai irrukavillai

Narumugaye narumugaye nee oru naaligai nillai  
Sengani ooriya vaay thiranthu nee oru thiru mozhi sollai  
Attrai thingal annilavil kotra poigai aadugaiyil  
Otrai paarvay paarthavannum neeya  
Attrai thingal annillavil netri tharala neer vadiya  
Kotra poigal aadugaiyil neeya

Yaayum yaayum yaaragiyaro nendru naerndhathenna



Yaalum neeyum yevalli-aridhum ooravu saerndhathenna  
Oray oru theendal saythai ooyir kodi poothath enna  
Sembullam saerndhaa neer thulli pol  
Ambudai nenjam kallanthath enna

Thirumaganae thirumaganae nee oru naaligai paarai  
Vennira puraviyil vanthavanae vel vizhi mozhigal kellaai  
Attrai thingal annilavil kotra poigai aadugaiyil  
Otrai paarvay paarthavannum neeya.

**Song lyric English translation:**

O newly blooming flower bud, O newly blooming flower bud, (Narumugaye narumugaye)  
Stand here for an instant before me, (Nee oru naaligai nillaai)  
Opening your lips which drips honey (Sengani ooriya vaay thiranthu)  
Disclose a word in your language (Nee oru thiru mozhi sollaai)

Under the full moon night (Attrai thingal annillavil)  
As water drips down from your form (Netri tharala neer vadiya)  
Were you the one in the river? (Kotra poigal aadugaiyil neeya)

O my groom, O my groom (Thirumaganae thirumaganae)  
Look for a moment at me (Nee oru naaligai paarai)  
The one who came riding a white horse (Vennira puraviyil vanthavanae)  
Listen to my arrow-like eyes words (Vel vizhi mozhigal kellaai)

Under the full moon night (Attrai thingal annillavil)  
When I was swimming in the river (Kotra poigai aadugaiyil)  
Were you the one who watched me? (Otrai paarvay paarthavannum neeya)

What was that arrows from your deer-eyes pierce my heart? (Mangai maanvizhi ambukal en  
maarthulaithath enna)

After seeing the Paandi king (Paandi naadanai kanda)  
Why did my heart begin to pale (En manam passaley kondath enna)

What I saw under the moonlight (Nillaavillai paatha varnam )  
Still haunts me in my dreams (Kanaavilley thondrum innum)  
The scene that I saw under the moonlight (Nillaavillai paatha varnam )  
Still haunts me in my dreams (Kanaavilley thondrum innum)  
I became lean because my love was not with me (Illaithaen thudithaen porruka villai, Idaiyil  
megallai irrukavillai)

My family is not known to your family (Yaayum yaayum yaaraagiyaroe)  
Then how did our hearts became one (Nenju naernthathaena)  
My family is not known to your family (Yaayum yaayum yaaraagiyaroe)

Then how did our hearts became one (Nenju naernthathaena)

I was not known to you (Yaanum neeyum evvaliyaarithum)  
How was this Bond developed? (Ooravu saernthathenna?)

You touched me only once (Orae oru theendal seiyya)  
Then how it was my body bloomed (Uyirkkodi pootthathenna)  
You touched me only once (Orae oru theendal seiyya)  
Then how it was my body bloomed (Uyirkkodi pootthathenna)

Like the raindrop which joins with the soil (Semboolam saerntha neertthulipole)  
How our hearts were joined like this (Ambudai nenjam kalanthathaena)

### **Song analysis:**

This song has been written by poet vairamuthu. This song includes kurunthogai 40 tamil poetry era song also purananuru 112 song

The line attrai thingal(அற்றை திங்கள் அவ்வெண்ணிலவில்) has been taken from ancient tamil poem purananuru 112 in the poem purananuru it was sang by parimagalir to mis his death father velpari.it's a sad tragedy poem song to express the daughters mourning of his father's death but in the song the poet vairamuthu has taken the first line of the poem to appreciate the verses of purananuru. He converted into romantic story song towards young married couple. He awards the words atrai thingal (on that day) avvannilavil (under full moon) the line "attrai thingal annilavil koitra poigai .....neeya" the groom just impressing the bride by questioning her in a affectionate way by personifying a woman and nature together in a impressive manner by questioning are you the one dancing in the river by flowing water in the forehead under the full moon.

The very first line narumugaiye describes the flower blooming moment. The poet vairamuthu describes today a moment of blooming flower with who is running from his love and asking her to stop running stand an instant for him (narumugaiye narumugaiye nee oru naligai nillai)

The next line (senkani uriya vai thiranthu no oru thiru mozhi sollai) the poet says " senkani" kani means fully riped which in climatric stage the colour change and flavor development stage, so he describes a ladys lips to the fruit which is in climatric stage by saying "ni oru thirumozhi sollai" asking his lady to say a love word

Next tranza lady sings" mangai maan vizhi ambugal en marthulaithathenna "in this line the poet describe the lady's eyes and her look" mangai "means in a typical tamil word meaning lady "maan vizhi" means a look of a deer p"ambugal" means bow " thulaithathenna" means drill his chest the

whole meaning her deer look (deep love look towards him) drilled his chest means drilling his heart

Next line " pandi nadanai kanda vannam en mana pasalai kondathenna" pandi is a kingdom name.pandi nadanai means a person belongs to pandi kingdom. The lady says this line the moment she sees him; her heart gets fever because she loves him that much

The next line " nilavile partha vannam kanavile thonrum innum" nilavu means moon "partha vannam"means looking under the moon remains in his dreams " kanavil " means dream

" Ilaithen thudithen, porukavillai, edaiyinil megalai irukavillai " in this line the lady expresses her love towards him.she cannot bear waiting she became thin throbbing for love even her hip belt "megalai"(golden ornament for hip) did not stand in her hip.

The line "thirumagale,thirumagane thirumagane ni oru naligai parai" thirumagane means calling his beloved (Groom) The lady asking him stand for her love in a moment

" Vennira puravaiyil " means white horse." Vennira puravaiyil vanthavane means a person who came in white horse " velvizhi mozhigal kellai" vizhi means look.vel vizhi means spear. So, the spear look the toral meaning listen to spear look language

"Sembulam serantha neerthuli pol ambudai nenjam kalanthanave" this line taken from kurunthogai 40 the rainwater goes to 5ed land (colour description of the land) which mixed together become red colour mud water the same way naturally our hearts also mixed he asked his beloved in questioning manner.

### **Conclusion:**

In this poem we may see the author's poetry skill. This poem may be especially attractive to people who are fond of modern Tamil. It is a star example of modern Tamil poetry.

### **Acknowledgement:**

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## The Benefits of Internet-Based Language Tools for Teaching English Pronunciation to Non-Native English Speakers in Thailand: A Synopsis

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### Abstract

This extended summary establishes the core arguments, evidence, and implications of the paper while preserving its structure and emphasis. It traces the logic from problem framing through literature synthesis, benefits and implementation strategies, limits and risks, and closes with role-specific recommendations and future research directions that are tailored to Thailand's English-language education system.

### Introduction: Purpose and Rationale

The paper addresses a long-standing imbalance in Thai English education: learners' written proficiency frequently outpaces their spoken intelligibility, with pronunciation being the primary bottleneck. While English occupies a central place in Thailand's national curriculum and in students' academic trajectories, workplace mobility, and regional integration (ASEAN), systematic pronunciation teaching is often uneven. In practice, time and assessment lean toward grammar, vocabulary, and reading—skills that align with national testing systems—while pronunciation often appears as occasional imitation or read-aloud practice with little feedback and limited assessment.

Through this framework, the paper investigates whether internet-based tools—including mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) apps, automatic speech recognition (ASR) platforms, and phonetic visualization software—can help close the gap between curricular ambition and classroom reality. It advances the proposition that these tools will not replace teachers, nor should they, but that they can systematically supply what large, exam-oriented classrooms struggle to provide—individualized, immediate feedback, abundant low-anxiety practice, multimodal input and data that guides instruction.

The scope is deliberately broad. The paper treats pronunciation as a composite of segmental accuracy (e.g., /l/–r/, dental fricatives, final consonants, vowel distinctions) and suprasegmental control (stress, rhythm, and intonation)—with the latter frequently neglected yet tightly linked to intelligibility. It situates Thailand’s context within current SLA frameworks and it engages the sociolinguistic reality that English today is a lingua franca: intelligibility across diverse accents matters more than native-like imitation. The analysis stretches from classroom practice to policy (curriculum standards and assessment), teacher education (phonetics and digital literacy), and equity (rural access, device/data inclusion), because technology only produces impact when embedded within coherent systems.

## **Problem Framing**

### **The Stakes of Intelligibility**

Global communication hinges on speakers being understood the first time. Research summarized in the paper shows that listeners’ judgments of competence and comprehensibility are more sensitive to pronunciation than to grammatical accuracy. A Thai graduate who writes well

but cannot make themselves clearly understood in a meeting, interview, or classroom setting faces a disadvantage unrelated to their conceptual ability. Therefore, pronunciation is not a superficial enhancement. It is structural to opportunity.

### Thai Systemic Constraints

Three systemic factors negatively impact pronunciation outcomes in Thailand:

1. **Curricular Emphasis and Assessment.** Even where official syllabi invoke “communicative competence,” practical assessment systems reward grammar and reading, with a limited focus on oral practice. Pronunciation targets are rarely built into outcomes or rubrics, and teachers often lack time and tools to grade oral production.
2. **Teacher Preparation and Confidence.** Many teachers report limited formal training in articulatory phonetics and in diagnosing errors typical of Thai-to-English transfer (e.g., /l/–/r/, final stops, vowel length). When teachers are unsure of modeling, they understandably revert to safer, text-driven tasks. Large classes (40–50 students) compound this: whole-class speaking practice is noisy, time-consuming, hard to monitor, and difficult to assess fairly.
3. **Access and Exposure.** Outside Bangkok and a few urban centers, consistent exposure to proficient English speech is limited. Students seldom hear sustained, varied models, especially for prosody (stress timing and intonation patterns) that are not obvious in print. Limited exposure makes it harder to build broader perceptual categories, particularly for contrasts absent in Thai.

### Thai L1 Transfer: Segmentals and Suprasegmentals

The paper synthesizes a decade of findings to outline a predictable difficulty profile:

- **Segmental issues:** There is persistent /l/–r/ confusion and the substitution of dental fricatives /θ/ and /ð/ with /t/ and /d/, frequent final consonant deletion or unreleased stops and vowel merging (e.g., ship/sheep, full/fool) due to fewer Thai categories and length differences. These errors affect accent and, depending on the context, intelligibility.
- **Suprasegmental issues:** Thai is tonal, while English is stress-timed. Learners often produce flat intonation, misplace lexical stress and maintain syllable timing that obscures information structure. Research cited in the paper emphasizes that mistimed stress and monotonous or misplaced pitch movement can lower intelligibility even when single phonemes are correct.

### **Sociolinguistic Factors**

Learners frequently report pronunciation anxiety and fear of ridicule, which reduces willingness to attempt extended speech. In addition, accent ideology—the elevation of a single “native” target—can demotivate learners who, despite progress, still diverge from that standard. The paper reframes the goal as intelligibility within English as a Lingua Franca (ELF): Thai learners must understand and be understood by speakers from diverse linguistic backgrounds, not only by North American or British L1 speakers.

### **Theoretical Foundations for Technology-Mediated Pronunciation**

The paper aligns the functions of internet-based tools with well-established SLA mechanisms:



- **Interaction Hypothesis:** Learning accelerates through interaction that provides feedback and opportunities to repair misunderstandings. ASR role-plays, voicebots, and structured dialogues simulate turn-taking and corrective moves, allowing learners to practice more interaction than class time permits.
- **Noticing Hypothesis:** Errors must become perceptually noticeable for acquisition to occur. Visualization (spectrograms and pitch contours) and highlighted contrasts make subtle misunderstandings visible and audible, helping learners “see” stress and intonation or compare their waveform to a target.
- **Output Hypothesis:** Push learners to produce and self-correct. Production done under constraints reveals gaps that input alone may not. ASR-based drills trigger repeated attempts until the signal matches the target.
- **Self-Determination Theory:** Motivation rises with autonomy (self-paced practice), competence (immediate feedback and visible progress), and relatedness (peer sharing or class-linked goals). Gamified progression helps to harness these drivers, especially for shy students who prefer to avoid public speaking.

By mapping features (instant feedback, repetition, visualization, autonomy) to mechanisms (feedback, noticing, pushed output, intrinsic motivation), the paper explains why internet-delivered pronunciation work can yield learning conditions rarely achievable at scale inside a typical Thai classroom.

### Literature Synthesis

Across recent analyses and classroom studies summarized in the paper, several patterns emerge:

1. **ASR-Supported Training Improves Segmentals.** Multiple studies report that learners receiving real-time phoneme-level feedback (e.g., on /l/–/r/, final stops) make larger gains than students in imitation-only or delayed-feedback conditions. Thai studies echo this: frequent, short app sessions correlate with clearer segmental production and greater practice volume.
2. **Visualization Lifts Prosodic Control.** Tools that display pitch contours and syllable prominence help learners reshape intonation patterns. For Thai speakers, seeing a rising yes/no question contour or a stress shift is often the moment of realization needed to internalize a different rhythm.
3. **Autonomy and Motivation Matter.** Learners sustain practice when they can choose modules, track progress, and repeat safely. Thai university associates using mobile apps report lower anxiety and higher willingness to communicate, consistent with the affective curriculum.
4. **Blended Beats Purely Digital or Purely Traditional.** The strongest outcomes appear when teachers explicitly integrate app tasks with lesson targets and then use class time for communicative application (role-plays, presentations, peer feedback). In such models, technology supplies a density of practice and feedback and the teachers supply the meaning, discourse, culture, and assessment.
5. **Gaps Persist.** The paper highlights the under-representation of Thai contexts in long-horizon, controlled studies and the limited analysis of rural deployment and low-resource schools. It also highlights the weak diagnostics for suprasegmentals in mainstream apps and the scarce research into how feedback phrasing affects Thai learners' uptake and motivation.

## **Benefits of Internet-Based Tools in the Thai EFL Context**

### **1) Immediate, Individualized Feedback**

Where one teacher cannot feasibly correct 45 students in real time, ASR scoring and model playback give every learner their own feedback loop. The paper emphasizes that specificity matters: “You said /l/; the target is /r/” + slow-motion model + articulatory tip can break entrenched habits more effectively than general advice like “speak more clearly.” Frequent micro-attempts build motor patterns and reduce linguistic fossilization.

### **2) Autonomy and Practice Volume**

Thai students’ class time is limited and oriented towards tested skills. Apps extend practice to commuting time, after-school slots, and home use, multiplying speaking attempts per week. The sense of control—choosing modules, setting streak goals—converts idle minutes into cumulative exposure. Over weeks, this raises both perceptual acuity and production stability.

### **3) Visualization and Multimodal Feedback**

For tonal-language speakers, English prosody is counterintuitive. Visualization renders invisible features visible: a flat line versus a rising contour, light vs. heavy stress and vowel length patterns. When paired with slowed audio and articulatory animations, visual channels promote noticing and increase self-correction. Multimodal redundancy (audio + visual + text) also supports learners with different processing strengths.

### **4) Accessibility and Equity**

The paper argues that mobile-first, low-bandwidth tools can be equalizers where trained phonetics teachers are scarce. Downloadable modules allow practice in areas where internet connectivity is low and shared devices or school-managed labs can spread access. Critically, apps can include multiple accent models, widening exposure beyond a single status norm and preparing learners for ELF realities.

### **5) Differentiation at Scale**

Apps adaptively target weak points (e.g., final /t/ release, /v/ vs. /w/) and adjust difficulty. Teachers can assign phoneme or pattern-specific tasks by group and review class dashboards to spot common problem areas (e.g., “half the class isn’t marking question rises”). This pushes individualized support into large classes without radically increasing teacher workload.

### **6) Confidence and Affective Safety**

Private, repeatable practice reduces social risk. Visible progress—scores, contour alignment, unlocked levels—translates effort into competence signals. Studies summarized in the paper link short daily practice with higher willingness to communicate and lower speaking anxiety, especially for learners who are reluctant to speak up in class due to shyness or introversion.

### **Implementation for Thailand: From Concept to Routine**

The paper turns from “can” to “how,” outlining system-compatible ways to embed pronunciation technology.

### **Curriculum and Assessment Alignment**

Pronunciation gains durability when it is planned for and assessed. The paper proposes that national and school-level curricula define CEFR-aligned descriptors for both segmentals and suprasegmentals (e.g., B1: maintains primary word stress, uses rising intonation in yes/no questions, sustains final stop consonants in high-frequency words). When outcomes exist, teachers have permission (and pressure) to allocate time, and students recognize pronunciation as graded work, not extra credit.

Rubrics can incorporate tool-generated items (audio portfolios, app progress logs) and blend them with live tasks (role-plays, presentations). The key is to construct alignment: if intelligibility is the goal, assessment must capture clarity in spontaneous speech, not just within app scores.

## **Rural Inclusion and Infrastructure**

The paper acknowledges infrastructure constraints—patchy Wi-Fi, limited devices, charging logistics, data costs—and responds with layered strategies:

- Offline/low-data modules to protect online practice from bandwidth shocks.
- Device pools (school carts, library checkout) to serve students without smartphones.
- Charging stations and basic maintenance plans to keep devices usable.
- Partnerships with telecoms for educational data bundles.

Because rural schools often tend to have fewer trained teachers, thoughtfully delivered apps can disproportionately benefit these learners and provide additional access and support systems.

## **Teacher Professional Development**

Technology impact rests on teacher agency. The paper recommends practice-rich professional development that integrates:

- Phonetics essentials tailored to Thai transfer issues (articulatory contrasts, common error diagnosis).
- Hands-on tool use (setting up classes, interpreting dashboards, assigning targeted modules).
- Lesson design that connects app tasks to weekly objectives and in-class communicative activities.
- Coaching cycles to sustain adoption: try a routine, review learner data with a mentor, adjust.
- Sample language for giving feedback that is supportive, specific, and actionable (“Your /r/ is close; watch the tongue and avoid lateral airflow. Try again on these three minimal pairs.”).

When teachers see before/after audio and class-level trend lines, skepticism tends to give way to instructional curiosity.

### **Blended Learning Routines**

The paper favors repeatable routines over unplanned usage, for example:

- **Flipped micro-practice (10–15 min):** before class, learners complete an app module on a target (e.g., final stops, question intonation).

- **In-class consolidation (15–20 min):** teacher demos, drills, and communicative tasks (info-gap dialogues, role-plays) that require the target pattern.
- **Post-class reflection (5–10 min):** learners record a short monologue or dialogue, submit to the app and to a class portfolio; teacher samples a few clips to plan next steps.

Over weeks, this routine builds muscle memory (via app density) and transfer (via classroom communication). Critically, it normalizes pronunciation as a weekly strand, not a one-off unit.

### Challenges and Limitations

The paper offers a balanced appraisal of risks.

1. **Infrastructure and Access.** Without devices, charging, or data, technology amplifies inequality. The remedy is policy-level support—hardware refresh cycles, shared-device programs, and subsidized data—plus instructional designs that do not presume that students have access to universal, 24/7 connectivity.
2. **Teacher Resistance and Cognitive Load.** Some teachers fear being displaced or even replaced. Others may worry about the competence of their own pronunciation. Others may feel overwhelmed by one more platform. Professional development must explicitly address mindset, model design, doable routines, and honor teacher expertise: technology is a teaching assistant, not a replacement.
3. **Overreliance and Misalignment.** App scores can become the goal, diluting communication aims. ASR can also inaccurately score heavily accented or beginner speech. Therefore, the paper insists on teacher mediation: use app data to target

instruction but also evaluate progress with live, communicative tasks and intelligibility rubrics.

4. **Suprasegmental Diagnostics Remain Weak.** Many tools excel on phonemes but are rough on rhythm and intonation. Teachers should pair apps with explicit prosody instruction (thought groups, nuclear stress, contrastive stress, question tunes) and use visualization as a support, not as the sole authority.
5. **Learner Variability and Motivation.** Autonomy helps many learners while others struggle without structure. Competitive gamification can demotivate those at the bottom of leaderboards. The solution is goal-based, mastery-oriented framing (effort and improvement count) and teacher check-ins to sustain habits.
6. **Data Privacy and Sustainability.** While it is not the paper's central focus, sustainable adoption implies clear data policies, transparent pricing, and avoidance of vendor lock-in. Schools need exit ramps and content portability in the event that online tools change.

## **Recommendations**

### **For Educators (Classroom and Program Level)**

- **Make pronunciation a feature.** Allocate weekly minutes, name the target (segmental and prosodic), and cement it in goals learners can recognize in their own speech.
- **Tie app tasks to communicative use.** Assign a focused app module (e.g., /l/-/r/ minimal pairs, rising question intonation) and immediately use that target in meaningful, short tasks (surveys, role-plays, peer interviews).



- **Use analytics as formative assessment.** Scan class dashboards to find common errors and plan micro-lessons and targeted listening discrimination work for the next class.
- **Build learner autonomy deliberately.** Teach how to set weekly goals and reflect on feedback (“What changed in your pitch contour?”), and track progress with an audio portfolio.
- **Normalize error as information.** Frame feedback as instructional, not punitive. Celebrate micro-gains (clearer final /t/, a correctly rising yes/no question).
- **Design inclusive routines.** Offer non-competitive challenges (e.g., class streaks) and flexible ways to demonstrate progress to avoid demotivating learners who dislike leaderboards.

### For School Leaders and Policymakers

- **Codify outcomes.** Add CEFR-aligned pronunciation descriptors to standards and local syllabus, explicitly covering prosody alongside phonemes.
- **Fund access and resilience.** Budget for device pools, charging carts, and connectivity solutions and negotiate education data bundles with telecom providers while also prioritizing rural schools.
- **Invest in sustained professional development.** Provide coaching-oriented professional learning that blends phonetics with practical, tool-integrated lesson design. Recognize and reward teacher leadership in pronunciation instruction.
- **Pilot, evaluate, scale.** Run structured pilots with comparison groups; collect intelligibility-focused evidence (teacher-rated speech samples, listener judgments) alongside app metrics and gauge what proves effective.

- **Adopt plural accent models.** Encourage tools and materials that expose learners to diverse Englishes, supporting the ELF target of clear, flexible intelligibility rather than rigid native-like speech.

### For Researchers

- **Run long-term Thai studies.** Track learners across semesters to assess retention and transfer to spontaneous speech, not just word-list performance.
- **Diversify comparisons by learner profile.** Compare rural-urban, adolescent-adult, beginner-intermediate, and high- vs. low-anxiety groups to understand moderators of effect.
- **Probe feedback quality.** Examine ASR accuracy for Thai transfer patterns and test which feedback phrasings and visualizations lead to successful self-repair and sustained motivation.
- **Compare implementation models.** Experimentally contrast traditional, purely digital, and blended designs on intelligibility, motivation, and cost-effectiveness.
- **Document teacher change.** Study how professional development models alter teacher beliefs, routines, and capacity to diagnose and respond to prosodic vs. segmental issues.

### For EdTech Providers and Partners

- **Strengthen prosody analytics.** Improve detection and explanation of stress, rhythm, and intonation and provide interpretable visualizations and targeted practice at the phrase level.

- **Design for low-resource contexts.** Provide offline modes, small-footprint updates, device-diagnostic performance, and local language support for teacher dashboards.
- **Support teacher workflows.** Class dashboards that provide actionable patterns, not just scores and exportable evidence for portfolios, including simple ways to assign targeted practice.
- **Respect privacy and portability.** Clear data policies and the easy export of learner audio and progress alongside pricing that schools can sustain year to year.

### A Concrete Scenario

A lower-secondary school in Isaan decides that every Grade 9 class will spend 15 minutes per week on pronunciation. The department defines a 12-week cycle (weeks 1–4: final stops and plural -s; weeks 5–8: question intonation and sentence stress; weeks 9–12: contrastive stress). Each week, students complete a 10-minute app module at home (downloadable), then, in class, the teacher runs a 15-minute routine:

1. Micro-demo of the target (2–3 minutes) with quick perception checks.
2. Communicative pair task requiring the target (7–8 minutes), with teacher roaming and coaching.
3. Two volunteer recordings played for the class to notice stress/intonation or final consonants, framed positively.
4. Exit reflection: students note one micro-gain and one next step in their log.

Every other week, students record a 30–45-second monologue (e.g., weekend plans, a short story retell). The teacher samples five recordings, tags common issues in the dashboard, and plans

the next week's micro-demo accordingly. The school maintains a device cart for learners without smartphones and the telecom partner provides an education data plan for after-school use. After one term, teachers report that more students volunteer to speak, final consonant deletion has declined markedly, and question intonation is audibly more consistent. Administrators hear cleaner speech in morning assemblies and students say they feel less intimidated to speak English.

### **Conclusion**

The paper's central claim is cautious and optimistic in equal measure. Internet-based tools are not magic, but they are exceptionally well-suited to the precise weaknesses of pronunciation teaching in Thailand: they create countless private, low-stakes practice opportunities while delivering immediate, individualized feedback that teachers cannot scale. They make prosody visible and track growth in ways that inform instruction. When these affordances are harnessed within blended routines, grounded to clear outcomes, and supported by teacher learning and equitable access, Thai learners can move from hesitant, text-bound English users to speakers whose pronunciation (segmental and prosodic) enables them to be understood clearly across diverse contexts.

Crucially, the target is not a single "native" accent. In an ELF world, intelligibility, flexibility, and confidence are the real currency. The paper reframes success accordingly and supplies practical pathways for classrooms, schools, and ministries to act. If Thailand aligns curriculum, assessment, professional development, and infrastructure around this reframing, pronunciation can shift from a neglected add-on to a core pillar of communicative competence, opening doors for learners academically, professionally, and personally.

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