



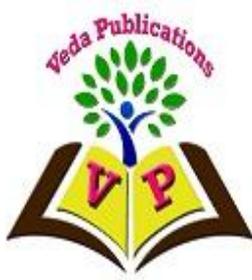
THE ROLE OF GLOBAL ENGLISH AND VERNACULAR WRITINGS IN DIASPORA: A DELIBERATION ON THE DIASPORIC LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

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ABSTRACT



English language exercises a certain power politics, in the diasporic communities, through which the regional dialects get channelized in the age of connectivity. Torn between two languages and two cultures, the diasporic writer navigates a new literary space where experiences of unsettlement and dislocation unfold through the expatriate writings that become the very act of creation, a decisive effort to form an ethnic identity. These writings consist of those written in the vernacular dialects, languages of the host lands or rather in a contact language of global acceptance through which the diasporic works attain a far and wide reach. The multifarious translations of the vernacular diasporic writings with the effective aid of global English is also quite significant in creating a universal market for the same. In this context, it is imperative to analyse the universal scope of the English language, the global lingua franca, and the politics associated with it in linking the diasporic communities to the socio-cultural ethos of their homeland. The paper focuses on the crucial role played by the global English as well as the vernacular writings in the diasporic space, with special reference to the Indian diasporic writings in English.

Keywords: *Diaspora, Global English, Migration, Language, Translation, Vernacular writings.*

**INTRODUCTION**

Employed for the very first time in the Greek translation of Deuteronomy, ("Though shall be a diaspora in all kingdoms of Earth") 'diaspora', is a term of Greek origin, where 'Dia' means 'to scatter' and 'sperio' means to sow. For the Greeks, diaspora meant the dispersal of people through colonization that resulted in diasporic formations. These dislocated people endured identity crisis and existential dilemma but gradually tried to acculturate with the culture and practices of the host land. Whereas for the Jews, Armenians and African the term acquired a more brutal meaning associated with a collective trauma, banishment into exile and a heart aching longing to return to homeland. During the early modern period, trade and labour Diasporas became part of the capitalist world, denoting transnational formations espousing deterritorialized identities. Diasporic settlement came into being as a consequence of the major events including colonialization, globalization, conflicts and civil war in homelands, industrialization and labour deficits, accelerated development of land, maritime transportation facilities, roles of religion and religious fundamentalism.

Today, it implies a positive and ongoing relationship between migrant's homeland and their places of work and settlement. The state linked diasporas possess a homeland to which they remain connected. They use certain strategies for survival which include:

- **Assimilationist strategy:** Strategies aimed at forming a new identity that stands close to host country's for practical goals.
- **Integrational strategy:** Strategies aimed at the substantial degrees of participation in social, economic and political sense of arenas of the host country.
- **Communalist strategy:** Strategies aimed at maintaining the ethno-national identity. The writers, intellectuals and artists play a significant role in the establishment of diaspora, maintenance of cultural traits and in extending communalist strategy.

William Safran has observed that, the diasporas "continue to relate personally or vicariously, to the homeland in a way or another, and their ethnic-

communal consciousness and solidarity are importantly defined by the existence of such a relationship." Over the years, the concept of 'diaspora', and the literature associated with the same, has become a powerful discourse for producing knowledge about nation, migration, displacement and transnationalism.

DISCUSSION

English, a language that was spoken by four million people on an island in the north of Europe, has become the global lingua franca in less than four hundred years chiefly as a consequence of certain global events such as the industrial revolution, international commerce, world wars, the collapse of the USSR, advent of information technology and popular culture. The very use of language becomes a political act as language holds a certain power position, among the diaspora, thereby exercising certain power politics though which the regional languages get channelized in the age of globalization. Often there happens a language shift as a consequence of which the speech community gradually of its two languages in favour of the other. Language mixing is yet another effect of the efforts of the expatriates to acculturate with the language and culture of their hostland. Code switching and code mixing are the two varieties often employed by the diasporic communities. It can either be due to the desire to reveal their mixed identity or the inability to express ideas in one language. This facilitates a more efficient and easier communication which incorporates both code switching and code mixing as per the situational demands.

Owing to its closeness to everyday conversations, vernacular language facilitates a close connectedness and a sense of companionship among the members of a community. Hence the vernacular can be considered as one of the literary techniques that can strike a chord with the majority of people. The dialogues and phrases often reinforce the setting of a narrative. Many of the ancient vernacular writings have been translated and preserved for the future diaspora. Vernacular writings are quite alien for different language users and hence it is a closed system, assessable just for the people within the population. .



Translation proves an important way through vernacular writing get translated, mainly to English language due to its impact on the international scenario. Global English, the style of writing that makes written English more easily understood by the non-nativespeakers, is the preferred style of translators, primarily because of its transparency. Rather than making English sound like other language or over formalizing it, writing with a global audience in mind clarifies written English so that anyone can comprehend. A piece of writing follows the guidelines of global English, it can more easily be understood across boundaries and cultures. When sentences are short and there is little to no syntactical ambiguity, translation takes less time and money.

It is not mandatory that every writer should resort to English language in expressing their ideas. It rests upon the discretion of the author to decide whether the work has to be written in the vernacular language or in global English. There are many Indian diasporic writers who refrain themselves from using the English language no matter the worldwide reach and recognition offered by the same. Whereas Salman Rushdie proves to be a strong advocator of English language and translation of the vernacular writings into English. He opines what while translating something is lost from the original but, at the same time, something new is gained as well. The use of English language by the colonized nations like India where the language of the colonizers is being used against them as if a strategic essentialism through which the empire writes back. Transliteration also becomes part of certain diasporic writings, especially in the Indian context where indigenous words such as *pooja*, *yoga*, *dhoti*, *pyjams*, etc are used. At times, this results in certain new coinages such as '*Chutnification*' used by Salman Rushdie. "Hinglish", a portmanteau of the languages English and Hindi, is often the budding favoured language of the urban and semi-urban educated Indian youth, as well as the Indian diaspora abroad. Many internet platforms and voice commands on Google also recognize 'Hinglish'.

Diasporic imaginariy is a condition of an impossible mourning that transforms mourning into melancholia. In the imaginariy of diasporas both

mourning and melancholia persists. (Mishra 9). For this group the nation is not just an imagined community even though it is constructed out of the fantasies about a race or class. These fantasies exist only as long as it is perceived to be under threat from the other. Homeland becomes a fantasy structure in which the diasporic community perceives itself as a homogeneous entity. The rupture from the homeland is perceived as a traumatic incident that becomes part of the fantasy itself.

The diaspora space has become a critical means for understanding global and transnational processes within the post-colonial nation state. (Georgy) Often considered as an umbrella term, including all those literary works written by the authors outside their native country, diasporic literature deals with themes of quest of identity, existential rootlessness, and alienation which emerged as a result of migration and expatriation. Despite being away from their native land the diasporic writers remain connected to their homeland through their literary outputs that are often associated with the diasporic imaginariy.

Exile in the form of migration has been the cause of the emergence of a large number of writers. The diasporic writer possess the ambiguous status of being both the ambassador of the homeland and the refugee in the host land. As a refugee he seeks security and protection and as an ambassador he projects his own culture. They live on the margins of two nations and create cultural theories. As they are torn between the two places and two cultures and often languages, the emigrant writer navigates a new literary space. The diasporic literature arises under these circumstances. Therefore, the expat writer senses a forceful necessity to write and hence, it becomes the very performance of creation, a determine dexterity to form an ethnic distinctiveness and identity.

The diasporic literature also deals frequently with the inner conflict in the context of cultural displacement. The immigrants away from the homeland sway between crisis and reconstruction. They are thrice alienated from the native land they left behind, from their new host country and their children. The longing to regain lost home often culminates in the creation of a different version of



home. As Salman Rushdie observers, "one physical alienation from India at almost inevitably means that we will not be capable of redeeming precisely the thing that was lost, that will, in short, create fictions not actual cities or villages, but invisible ones, imaginary homelands, Indians of mind."

The chief characteristic features of the diasporic writings include the quest for identity, uprooting and re-rooting, insider and outsider syndrome, nostalgia and nagging sense of guilt. The diasporic writers turn to their homeland for various reasons. Diasporic literature ignites and synergies common and shared values in addition to coalition building among the social and political diaspora. It also helps countries to bring about a strategic partnership based on prosperity, security and commitment to freedom and peace. Their writings help in many ways and is an influential network connecting the entire globe

CONCLUSION

Diaspora, the phenomenon of scattering of people from one common place to another, leads to intermingling of individuals from varied linguistic profiles, therefore language and the politics associated with it, becomes an undeniable outcome of diaspora. Different Languages coming into contact with each other may lead to convergence of input varieties, accommodation within languages, and creation of mixed communication speech forms or evolution of new languages. Hence, it is evident that language play a central role in modelling diaspora and making it effective in several contexts. Diasporic writers are often pre occupied with elements of nostalgia as they seek to locate themselves in new culture through the employment of the politics of language in order to address the issues related to amalgamation or disintegration of cultures, reflecting the immigrant experience that comes out of the immigrant settlement. Expatriate literature has helped in casting a new aura around global India and have also contributed in building a novel image of India abroad. The first generation immigrants are always concerned with keeping the social, cultural baggage intact. Conscious attempts are made by the diasporic communities to pass their traditions to the future generation. Unlike the older generation, the younger generation does not identify as much with

their respective language groups. They are bicultural and are likely to express their opinions in the global language than their vernacular languages.

Hence English enjoys superiority over the vernacular. Hence expatriate writings, with the aid of English translation, occupies a place of great significance between countries and cultures.

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