



## RESEARCH ARTICLE



## LANGUAGE &amp; ITS INFLUENCE ON SOCIETY &amp; CULTURE

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## ABSTRACT



The present article deals language with its parameters and it interprets how they can be used as the means of communication and it also sees how the items can be practiced in social and cultural visions. Language is, occurs in a space and time, not a sudden event, it passes through social and cultural practices and receives contents from there, as situation demands. In a language contents are main, because, it is the contents which occupy their own forms and meanings later on. Language is creative writing, it creates its principles and properties and develops its patterns, restrictions, grammaticality and etc. Mind thinks, since it can think, it thinks more and more and uses deductive approaches and always adds to new ones. Language is used as a means of communication and its influence on society and culture is more than. Due to its creative and reproductive nature language creates, it creates a system of signs, symbols, signals, feelings (emotions), jesters, postures, sounds or speeches (articulatory), letters or words or sentences (in both articulatory or graphic forms), cinematographies and etc. this is a process which constructs a language. There are two forms of language—one is speech which is primary is used as a speech, the other is graphic which is secondary is used in writings, language leads to arbitrariness but follows some applied restrictions through which one can generate some contents but follows applied rules, language follows systems so it is system of system.

**Keywords:** *Semantics, Cross-Culture, Communication, Utterance, Pragmatics.*



Language encodes the items of communication, and it studies how the people of different groups, cultures, communities, societies, institutions countries and etc. behave different in their languages, they set up code words in grammatical pattern of that language and generally share their views mutually, thus the language is not a result of sudden event but it grows in any space and time, the people develop a system of signs, symbols, signals, feelings (emotions), sounds or speeches (articulatory), letters or words or sentences (in both graphic and articulatory forms) and etc., this is a constructing process of any language which is connected with brain, the mind of human being is very complicated and intelligent one and it has inborn capacity to think. In a language the speech is primary which is used as a speech, on the other hand, the other is written or graphic which is secondary is used in writings, language leads to arbitrariness and one can generate set of rules using it, thus language follows systems so it is system of system. Languages is symbolic systems with properties and principles of their own, and it is precisely those properties and principles that determine the way in which the linguistic sign functions as a sign. Language is for communicating about the world outside of language. Semantics is the science of meaning. It is a systematic study of meaning, and linguistic semantics is the study of how languages organize and express meanings. There are three theories concerned with the systematic study of meaning: psychology, philosophy and linguistics. Their interests may be different, yet each helps the other. Psychology studies how an individual human being learns, it concerns with retaining, recalling, or losing information process in a human mind; it helps to classify, make judgment and solve problem and finally in other words, thanks to Psychology the human mind seeks meanings and works with them. Philosophers of language are concerned with how we know, how any particular fact that we know or accept as true is related to other possible facts—what must be antecedent (a presupposition) to that fact and what is a likely consequence, or entailment of it; what statements are mutually contradictory, which sentences express the same meaning in

different words, and which are unrelated. Linguists want to understand how language works. Just what common knowledge do two people possess when they share a language—English, Hindi, or whatever—that makes it possible for them to give and get information, to express their feelings and their intentions to one another, and to be understood with a fair degree of success? Linguistics is concerned with identifying the meaningful elements of specific languages. This freedom from context is possible only because language is conventional, or has the feature of arbitrariness. Because language is creative, our communication is not restricted to a fixed set of topics; we constantly produce and understand new messages in response to new situations and new experiences. It is impossible to explore semantics without dealing with syntax (and vice versa) because the two are closely interrelated. The meaning of a sentence is more than the meanings of the words it contains, and the meaning of a word often depends partly on the company it keeps—what other words occur in the same sentence.

### UTTERANCES AND SENTENCES

A language is a system of symbols through which people communicate. The symbols may be spoken, written, or signed with the hands which are shared by members of a community. It is useful to consider other signs that we know and how we react to them. The sign and the observer share a context of place and time in which the sign attracts the observer's attention. Every perception is a unique experience. To say that we 'recognize' a phenomenon means that we match it with previous experiences stored in our memory. Almost certainly, if one observes a sign and derive some meaning from it, one must have seen a similar sign before. Meanings are often personal. The meaning of any sign depends on the space-time context in which one observes it. Conventional signs can have different meanings in different contexts or different words are linguistic signs, similar in certain respects to natural and conventional signs. They do not have meanings but rather are capable of conveying meanings to those who can perceive, identify and interpret. Words go together to form sentences which in turn are capable



of conveying meanings. In order to grasp what somebody says, one must first of all perceive the utterance—hear a spoken utterance, see a written one. But hearing alone is not enough, nor is seeing. One gets no message from an utterance in a language one doesn't know. Identification of the elements in an utterance requires speaker and hearer to share what Clark (Clark Herbert, 1996: 92) calls "common ground."

The spontaneous, situational and meaningful experience as language user is an utterance. It is an act of speech or writing; it is a specific event, at a particular time and place and involving at least one person, the one who produces the utterance, but usually more than one person. As Patrick Griffiths says "Utterances are the raw data of linguistics. Each utterance is unique, having been produced by a particular sender in a specific situation2." (Patrick Griffiths, 2006: 04) A sentence, on the other hand, is the abstract linguistic entity on which an utterance is based. It is not an event; it is a construction of words that is done by applying the linguistic knowledge of a language (English or whatever language), in a particular sequence which is meaningful (in that language). To quote Frank Palmer, "...an utterance is an event in time — it is produced by someone and at some particular time, while a sentence is an abstract entity that has no existence in time, but is part of the linguistic system of a language. The distinction is, obviously, related to that of language or competence and speaking or performance, the sentence belonging essentially to the former and the utterance to the latter."3 The meaning of a sentence is determined by the language, something known to all people who have learned to use that language. It is the meanings of the individual words and the meaning of the syntactic construction in which they occur. Griffiths also uses the term utterance to cover not only spoken utterances but also individual stretches of written language up to sentence-size, done by a particular person at a particular time. The crucial difference between sentences and utterances is that sentences are generally not tied to contexts, whereas utterances are identified by their contexts.

The meaning of an utterance is the meaning of the sentence plus the meanings of the circumstances: the time and place, the people involved, their backgrounds, their relationship to one another, and what they know about one another. The meaning of any language symbol depends to an extent on the context in which it occurs. Thus, meaning can be discussed in terms of three distinguishable stages. The first stage is a semantic one: literal meaning. The others are two kinds of pragmatic interpretation: explicature and implicature. The literal meaning of a sentence is based on just the semantic information that one has from one's knowledge of a particular language and here no consideration of context is involved. An explicature "is a basic interpretation of an utterance, using contextual information and world knowledge to work out what is being referred to and which way to understand ambiguous expressions." (Patrick Griffiths, 2006: 06) These explicatures of utterances go beyond the literal meaning of the sentence. They are interpretations based on both the linguistic context and non-linguistic context. In working out an implicature, we go further and ask what is hinted at by an utterance in its particular context, what the sender's "agenda is." Thus literal meaning is the foundation for explicature, on which implicatures are based. It follows from this that semantics does not concern with the meaning of utterances but only with the meaning of sentences. The study of utterance meaning is Pragmatics while the study of sentence meaning and word meaning is Semantics. "Semantics is the study of the 'toolkit' for meaning: knowledge encoded in the vocabulary of the language and in its patterns for building more elaborate meanings, up to the level of sentence meanings. Pragmatics is concerned with the use of these tools in meaningful communication. Pragmatics is about the interaction of semantic knowledge with our knowledge of the world, taking-into-account contexts of use." (Patrick Griffiths, 2006: 06)

The inspector pointed his cane straight  
at me. 'You, young man,  
are intelligent, honest; vivacious fellow  
in this crowd of thugs



and idiots. In any jungle, what is the  
rarest of animals — the  
creature that comes along only once in  
a generation? '

I thought about it and said:

The white tiger. '

That's what you are, in this jungle. '

(Adiga, 2008: 35) (Bolds are mine)

Utterances are interpreted in context. In the above quoted dialogues all the bolds are utterances. These dialogues are uttered in a particular context i.e. the inspector of school was on surprise inspection. The above utterance "The white tiger" denotes the sentence 'the rarest of animal that comes only once in a generation in any jungle is the white tiger.' The utterance "what you are" denotes 'the poor student, Balram like the white tiger is rarest of students so far as intelligence, honesty and vivaciousness are concerned' While the utterance "in this jungle" denotes 'The school is converted into a dark jungle where all the teachers and students are devoid of duties, faith and aims, and the total atmosphere is that of anarchy'. Only the literal meaning of a statement cannot fully commutate the message. The literal meaning of a sentence is based on just the semantic information that one gets from his or her knowledge of the language involved. As the literal meaning of the utterance "The white tiger" is 'a wild beast of white colour that hunts the other animals' which is in no way sufficient for conveying the message. For communicating the message as sender's intention, the literal meaning needs an implicature, which leads the utterance to its particular context, and tells what the sender's 'agenda' is and an explicature which is a basic interpretation of an utterance, using contextual information and world knowledge to work out what is being referred to and which way to understand ambiguous expressions, such as the phrase "in this jungle". Without the help of implicature and explicature one may interpret the utterance "in this jungle" as 'There are so many animals in this jungle' or 'Almost all the trees are bare in this jungle.' And so on. But these types of interpretation will fail to satisfy the expectations aroused by the literary

structure which goes just before it i.e. "The inspector pointed his cane straight at me. You, young man, are intelligent, honest, vivacious fellow in this crowd of thugs and idiots. In any jungle, what is the rarest of animals — the creature that comes along only once in a generation?". An explicature involves treating one or more words as if they had meanings different from their literal ones. To understand how figurative uses of language work requires the reader or listener to supplement semantics with pragmatics. Context is used not only as a foundation for inferring which referents are being talked about and which senses of ambiguous expressions are likely to be the intended ones, but also to decide whether any meanings should be replaced to yield figurative explicatures. We learn word meanings in context and our memory records of words certainly bear encyclopedic connotations picked up from the contexts in which we have encountered them and from communications that those words contributed to. In Stage I the meanings of words are literal meanings. Abstracted from contexts of use, they are suitable for re-use in many different situations, rather than only in re-enactments of the original contexts in which we met them. Literal meanings are encoded in the language system and underpin the entailment possibilities of sentences. In the process of explicature, context is applied to sentence meaning to disambiguate it and establish what the referring expressions refer to. If the only word meanings used in the explicature are literal meanings, then we have a literal interpretation.

### NATIVIZATION AND ENGLISHIZATION

The English language is going through the natural processes of nativization of sounds, vocabulary, grammar and conventions of using language to perform various acts. The nativized variety is what is being used in everyday life, in media, and in other domains of national life. Along with the process of nativization of English, the process of English influencing the local languages continues, which has been termed 'Englishization'.

The effective communication using world Englishes depends on the awareness of *nativization* of English and *Englishization* of the languages in contact with English. *Nativization refers to the*



adaptation of English in particular social-cultural settings, and leads to qualifying descriptors such as 'US English', 'Indian English', 'Singaporean English', and so on. Englishization refers to the manifest influences of English on other languages in a given repertoire; levels of languages from pronunciation through literary genres may be affected in discernible ways. The phenomenon is of concern to some purist observers, a matter of increasing the flexibility of codes of communication to others.<sup>7</sup>

The cultural context affects language use and this reflects in the colonial writings. As Alatis and Lowenberg concisely have put it *Nativization brings forth a new variety of English, and Englishization causes changes in the native language.*<sup>8</sup> Both processes are triggered by language contact and the natural inclination in users to mould the medium to express relevant contextual realities.

Texts are nativized — given their regional, national and local characters — by the appeal to such *multinorms of styles and strategies* in each *distinct context of situation.* (Kachru, 167.)

Contextual nativization is illustrated by the passage cited below. Any text must bring into account its context of setting — place, time and participants. Cohesive devices are also nativizing characteristics of texts, having to do with lexical choices and grammar. The following passage from *The White Tiger* evokes India, and refers to the Indian women names;

*My aunts—Rabri, Shalini, Malini, Luttu, Jaydevi, and Ruchi—kept turning around and clapping their hands for me to catch up to them. (The White Tiger 16)*

Nativization affects the structure of language (e.g., sound system and rhythmic patterns, vocabulary and sentence structure) and use of language (e.g., conventions of speaking and writing). It is the process of nativization that is responsible for the differences manifest in pronunciation, lexicogrammar and literary creativity among various Englishes.

*'It's not piJJA. It's piZZa. Say it properly.'* (The White Tiger 154)

*It is excellent, no?* (The Reluctant Fundamentalist 15)

Rhetorical strategies are a salient feature of text-nativization, including the use of *contextually appropriate figures of speech.* (Kachru, 167.) India-

evoking expressions, for example, are *Like eunuchs discussing the Kama Sutra, the voters discuss the elections in Laxmangarh. (The White Tiger 98), 'Look at the snob! He's even dressed like a maharaja today!'* (The White Tiger 157)

Second, the direct reflection of *rhetorical devices for contextualizing and authenticating speech interaction* (Kachru, 167.) help in nativization of a text.

*We live in a glorious land. The Lord Buddha received his enlightenment in this land. The River Ganga gives life to our plants and our animals and our people. We are grateful to God that we were born in this land. (The White Tiger 34)*

Third, *transcreating proverbs and other idioms* (Kachru, 167) (more than just 'translating' them) sets the text in its cultural framework. Adiga uses these devices in his characters' discourse as *I remember swinging my hands and singing, 'Shiva's name is the truth!'* (The White Tiger 16) Shiva is the Hindu god and Balram invokes him which reminds India proverb — 'Satyam Shivam Sundram.'

*... the ruins proclaim the building was beautiful. (The Reluctant Fundamentalist 144)*

Fourth, *culturally dependent speech styles* (Kachru, The Alchemy of English, 167.) are utilized, to set narrative and conversation in a particular cultural context and to depict that context authentically and convincingly to the reader.

*I looked at the magnetic sticker of the goddess Kali—who is a very fierce black-skinned goddess, holding a scimitar, and a garland of skulls. (The White Tiger 135)*

In the quote below who needs beyond text help to know the connotation of the phrase *my country.*

*I should have been ecstatic, but earlier that week armed men had assaulted the Indian parliament, and instead of celebrating my good fortune, I was confronting the possibility that soon my country could be at war. (The Reluctant Fundamentalist 121)*

The present study of nativization aims to analyze and categorize in terms of following processes:



**TRANSFER**

The process of transfer involves the transfer of contextual units that are not elements of the target language, for example, the caste systems in India or religious taboos. Transfer is the most important process in *The White Tiger*. It seems impossible to convey the Indian way of life without transferring the social, cultural, and religious elements from Indian culture. The transfers discussed below show the collectivity of Indian society, the importance of seniority (in terms of age and/or position), politeness, and humility.

Transfer of cultural elements (using kinship term with names). The author uses this strategy not only when he introduces his family members for the first time but throughout the story. Consider for example:

*A hand stirs me awake...I shake my brother Kishan's legs off my tummy, move my cousin Pappu's palm out of my hair, and extricate myself from the sleepers. (The White Tiger 21)*

*Mr. Vikram Halwai, rickshaw-puller—thank you! My father was a poor man, but he was a man of honour and courage. (The White Tiger 23)*

*My ex-employer the late Mr. Ashok's ex-wife, Pinky Madam, taught me one of these things... (The White Tiger 3)*

*Mukesh Sir, the Stork's other son—got into the front seat and gave me orders. (The White Tiger 62)*

*My cousin-sister Reena got hitched off to a boy in the next village. (The White Tiger 36)*

In the discourse in India, generally in oral and at times in written, it is preferred that relatives and family members are addressed and referred to by kinship terms with names, however repetitive this might sound at times. The purpose is to show respect and good manners. For the same reason, the characters in *The White Tiger* often use kinship terms in addressing their acquaintances or even strangers.

**TRANSLATION**

Translation from Hindi or Urdu into English is very common in both the novels. Both the authors pattern their English structure after that of their native language. This process may result in a

different collocation from native English writing. The translation may be rank-bound and rank-changed. Rank-bound translation means the formal items of the first language are translated at the same 'rank' into the target language (e.g., a compound noun remains a compound noun) and rank-changed translation means the formal items of the first language are translated at different ranks into the target language, which can be higher and lower ranks. (e.g., Hindi or Urdu sentences are being reduced to a noun or a noun phrase in English).

*My aunts and cousin-sisters gathered around her. (The White Tiger 28)*

The *cousin-sisters* is a classic example of the mother tongue interference i.e. Hindi. One cannot find the word *cousin-sister* in any English dictionary.

*Now, our schoolteacher was a big paan-and-spit man... (The White Tiger 29)*

The phrase *a big paan-and-spit man* is a translation for a man who is habitual of chewing betel leaves and spits anywhere.

*He had eaten up the rickshaws and the roads. (The White Tiger 25)*

It is a way how people speak English in India. No one can eat a rickshaw or road but it is translated to show exploitation.

*So: I'm closing my eyes, folding my hands in a reverent namaste, and praying to the gods to shine light on my dark story. (The White Tiger 9)*

The phrase *to shine light on my dark story* is the translation of the phrase 'prabhu mere andhakarmay jeevan me ujala bhar do.'

*We admired his bus-company-issue khaki uniform... (The White Tiger 31)*

The phrase *bus-company-issue khaki uniform* indicates the way how people speak English in India. This phrase is the translation for a uniform of khaki colour issued by a bus company.

*Ten minutes later, I smelled the steel man's sweat and heard footsteps. (The White Tiger 227)*

The phrase *steel man* is the translation of the man who works in steel.



*"It's beautiful," she said, meeting my eyes (The Reluctant Fundamentalist 28)*

The phrase *meeting my eyes* is the translation of gazing at my eyes.

*... she went on, her condition has come back. (The Reluctant Fundamentalist 110)*

The translation *her condition has come back* is made to indicate that she re-suffers from the same illness.

*Working in a tea shop. Smashing coals. Wiping tables. Bad news for me, you say.*<sup>15</sup>

Again, these above sentences show a trailer how people in India use English language without a finite verb or ask questions without the subject and verb inversion in their routine discourse.

### SHIFT

This process involves using the fixed collocations or idioms from the native culture into the target language. Generally, this type of collocations or idioms does not establish formal equivalence as in translation.

*But lizards...each time I see one, no matter how tiny, it's as if I turn into a girl. (The White Tiger 28)*

*...he liked to dip his beak into their backsides, so they called him the Raven. (The White Tiger 25)*

*You can't expect a man in a dung heap to smell sweet. (The White Tiger 33)*

### HYBRIDIZATION

Hybridization entails the combination of lexical items from two or more languages for a compound formation (in this case, lexical items of English and Hindi).

*The drivers were waiting near the parking lot of the hotel, in their usual key-chain-swirling, paan-chewing... (The White Tiger 200)*

*A paan-maker sat on a wooden stall outside the gaudy blue door of a brothel... (The White Tiger 250)*

*I charged into the paan-seller. (The White Tiger 251)*

*I threw the potato vada at his feet. (The White Tiger 205)*

### CONCLUSION

Language varies person to person, the very people of a particular ethnic group behaves distinguished in their own language, uniforms, means of livelihood, customs, rites etc., this is clear that the cultures and societies behave unparalleled in their languages in any way. Language has to be learnt, if a British infant brings up in an Indian family, he or she would easily be learnt an Indian language, won't he or she? Necessarily a child learns through social and cultural exercises so he or she picks up that language which is used in that society in which he or she grows, thus the language is a form of social behaviour. Language is to be either formal or informal—formal language is more systematic, excessive typical, etiquettable in behaviour, used in courteous meetings, official works, office-files and etc., an educated section of society speaks formal language, on the other hand, the language which is informal is less systematic, more common, colloquial, rural, not gentle in behaviour, used in proverbs and maxims, personal matters, self-documents, comments among friends, diaries and etc., often it is also seen that the most of part of society which is uneducated does not so familiar with these principles of formal language, and the concerning point comes out to a woman is that why she is more polite and formal than that of a man in social behaviour. Sometimes when two or more languages meet with social and cultural phenomenons to borrow somethings and receive touch of hybridization and bilingualism and allow code switching and mixing. Indian subcontinental writers have no less than, their impression has been world-wide, and their stance have strongly been seen equivalent to the writers of that English generation and etc.

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