

Experimentation of the Language in the Novels of Rohinton Mistry

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Abstract

India is a multi-lingual, multi-cultural and multi-ethnic country, and it is one of the major demands of post-coloniality that Transcreation work should be carried on for the sake of literary expansion, national integration and international co-operation. The purpose of this Research Paper is to dwell on the relevance and usefulness of Transcreation as well as creative use of English in the fiction of Rohinton Mistry with reference to his novels *Such a Long Journey* (1991), *A Fine Balance* (1996) and *Family Matters* (2002). Rohinton Mistry mixes Hindi words along with Urdu, Gujarati and Parsi words in his narration to reinforce the impact of his narrative. Mistry being a Diasporic author experimented with the bilingual –and the bicultural competence of the reader in creating a hybrid identity that is typically and multiculturally Indian.

Key words- Transcreation, Multi-lingual, Multicultural, Parsi.

Introduction:-

Rohinton Mistry is an author belonging to Parsi community of Indian origin residing in Canada. He migrated to Canada in his early twenties as he wanted to become a Pop singer. He has confessed it even in various interviews that he migrated because it seems to be the fashion at his times. Youngsters of his generation used to migrate for better education, better career prospectus and other opportunities. Rohinton Mistry is one writer who basically deals with the themes of Immigration but has also experimented with the various Indian languages. In all his fiction the pain and grief of leaving his motherland can be easily observed. In fact being away from India for quite a longer period doesn't affect his memories and his emotions towards his birthplace. We can find a strong influence of Indianness in his novels. His fictional world is characterized by a sense of crisis of identity, nostalgic memories and a sense of alienation. He marks a definite departure from the general run of Indian English novelist in many ways. His novels concern more of human problems than issues arising out of regional loyalties. His character steps out of themselves and question not only the atmosphere which impinges on their consciousness but their own self indulgent attitude keeping them away from facing the truth. His criticism of the political, the civilized and the mean world is not guided by a sentimental extolling of Indian philosophy and value of life by a genuine faith in the reliability of the primitive value of sensuousness, passion and action. Nilufer Bharucha remarks:

Rohinton Mistry's texts are at the macro level splendid celebrations of Indian English while at the macro level they faithfully capture the rhythms of the Parsi Gujarati idiom. Unlike earlier Indian English writers, Mistry does not use Indian English to merely create a comic effect. He uses it consistently and naturally and thereby conveys its present status as one of the several Indian languages with its own distinctive phonetic and syntactic feature – a part of the phenomenon of global 'englishes'. This is a postcolonial mode of resistance offered by other contemporary writers too – like Salman Rushdie, Michael Ondaatje, Upmanyu Chatterjee and Bapsi Sidhwa among many others. 1

Indeed, *Such a Long Journey* demonstrates manipulative nature of language, and how truth and reality can often be very different from what it appears. Even Mistry has beautifully used various names to produce an element of interest in his fiction. Like former Prime Minister of India Mrs. Indira Gandhi has never been addressed with her name in the entire novel *Such a Long Journey*, she has always been addressed as the "Prime Minister". Mistry has used native terminology so the Indian readers can correlate with his fiction as well as to create a sense of satisfaction. In the words of Charu Chandra:-

While exposing the political corruption at the national level through third person narrative of newspaper reporting is Mistry's typical mode of resistance, it is more pungent when he attacks bloody minded super power like USA for their international domination. 2

He is magical in depicting situations with realism and down-to-earth worldliness. Mistry has a knack for painting the insignificant into significant, giving adequate word visuals for gestures, facial expressions and nuances of behavior making the depiction vivid and effective as in case of the Violinist Daisy, the way she plays her violin the description is beautiful.

In the novel *A Fine Balance* Mistry gives a picture of unity of human despite of various odds. Thus, he has

weaved into the narration of the novel a popular concept of Unity in diversity. Mistry has lent significance to his narration on the theme of Hindu- Muslim riots, Beautification of the city as done during Indira Gandhi's ruling as well as the atrocities done on Lower caste people. The novel expresses concerns of the people and their anxieties at the dehumanization and degradation of human values. In his narrative technique Mistry has applied different modes of writing adopting a translucent and simple style. In his narrative technique Mistry has narrated the story using cause and effect element, like in his third novel *Family Matters* where the past deeds of Nariman creates trouble for him in the last days of life. Then be it was the injustice he did to Lucy by not marrying her and so her memories haunted him during his last days, or his marriage to Jasmine which could not work and hence it had a bad effect on his step children Jal and Coomy. And later on they reflected their indifferent attitude towards him when he actually needs their love and care. He has recreated the past into meaningful symbols of contemporary situation and future possibilities. Rohinton Mistry, has given a wonderful literary treatment to the theme by putting the narrative in a contemporary framework blending into it autobiographical elements.

Mistry in the novel has minimized elaboration, but dramatized the nuances behind the facts. The dialogues are simple, natural and yet lively and functional. He has made use of vernacular words; the list is long, which appear unavoidable for explaining a point. Mistry is a writer of human ethos, life and passions and his theme, style and treatment of the plot establishes his identity as a writer of Parsi life in India. There is pure Indianness in his writings.

Mistry in his novel brings out poignant scenes in which reality is served and presented to its zenith. Rohinton Mistry mixes Hindi words in his narration to reinforce the impact of his narrative. Urdu-Hindi-Guajarati words have been used, but not out of place. However they add a rare treatment to the narrative.

The novelist however uses a special kind of narrative technique where politics also plays a major role in his novels.

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The list of few of the Regional words used by Rohinton Mistry in his novels

Words	Page No.	Words	Page No.	Words	Page No.
Kutchoomber, dhansak	18	Tohrun, masala, jieevti-jaagti, masala	19	And loongis; goaswalla, goaswalla's, Bismillah, goaswalla,	21
Seth, murgi	22	seesum, call hing	23	sadhus and acharyas	
goaswalla, chhee-chhee!	26	Chhee-chhee	27	Bazaar	28
Seth, 'Murgi, murgi!, murgi!, 'O seth	29	Mua lutchha	31	Sabaash, Sabaash	32
Seth, salaal	33				

Two

Words	Page No.	Words	Page No.	Words	Page No.
Sapaat, sav-ganthia, fikko-fuchuk, basmati	35	'Aavo, yaar	36	Yaar, arre	37
Chaalo, yaar, saali	38	Morcha, goondas, yaar, goondas, kusti, dustoorji, yaar, chowki	39	Yaar, sahibji, arre	40
Oollu	41	Yaar, goteloo	42	gilly gilly gilly!' gilly gilly gilly!'	44
Basmati, goaswalla, 'Arre, chaalo, chaalo	45	Gilly gilly gilly!'	46	Kavi kamala	47
Chaalo	49				

Three

Words	Page No.	Words	Page No.	Words	Page No.
Bay-sharam!, chaamray-chaamra	50	Chenchi, bhaiya, saali witch	51	'Sojjo soap, paapud	56
Overnaa	57	'theek hai!, theek hai!, paani, paani!	59		

Four

Words	Page No.	Words	Page No.	Words	Page No.
Bhaiya	62	Jaadu-mantar	63	WC chawl	65
Dhansak	66	Masala	68	Dubbawalla, Dhandar-paatyo, dubba, yaar	70
'Arre, how, a bawaji	71	Dubbawalla, Dubbawallas	72	Toba, toba, meherbani, no kothaa, gandoo, saala	73
Thuuck- thuck, Thuuck-thuck, satta, Arre nonsense	75	Maader chod, golaas, golaas	76	Yaar, broon, bhaiya's, subjo	77
Kuchravwalli, tandarosti	78				

Five

Words	Page No.	Words	Page No.	Words	Page No.
Yaar, namaaz	99	Chumpee-maalis1Tayel-maalis, maalis	102	Seth, boni	103
Paan-buying, 'abaash!	107	Baba	108	Chhee-chhee	110
Ghumsaan	111	Pukka	114	Goaswalla	118
Owaaryoo	120	Choolavati	122	Padayri, thaali	123

Future Outcome:

Rohinton Mistry is an insider to Bombay and his vignettes are naturally authentic. Ironically perhaps he is able to achieve this authenticity as he has distanced himself by immigrating to Canada so that he can produce the effect of an insider outsider to a scene, every detail of which is fetched and engraved in his mind. Remembering, reenacting, re-creating that place-time-people with accuracy, understanding, and insight are the vision of Rohinton Mistry. Present Research Paper is an effort to study the experimentation of Language as well as the use of native terminology in the novels of Rohinton Mistry and to cast light on the areas hitherto unexplored.

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