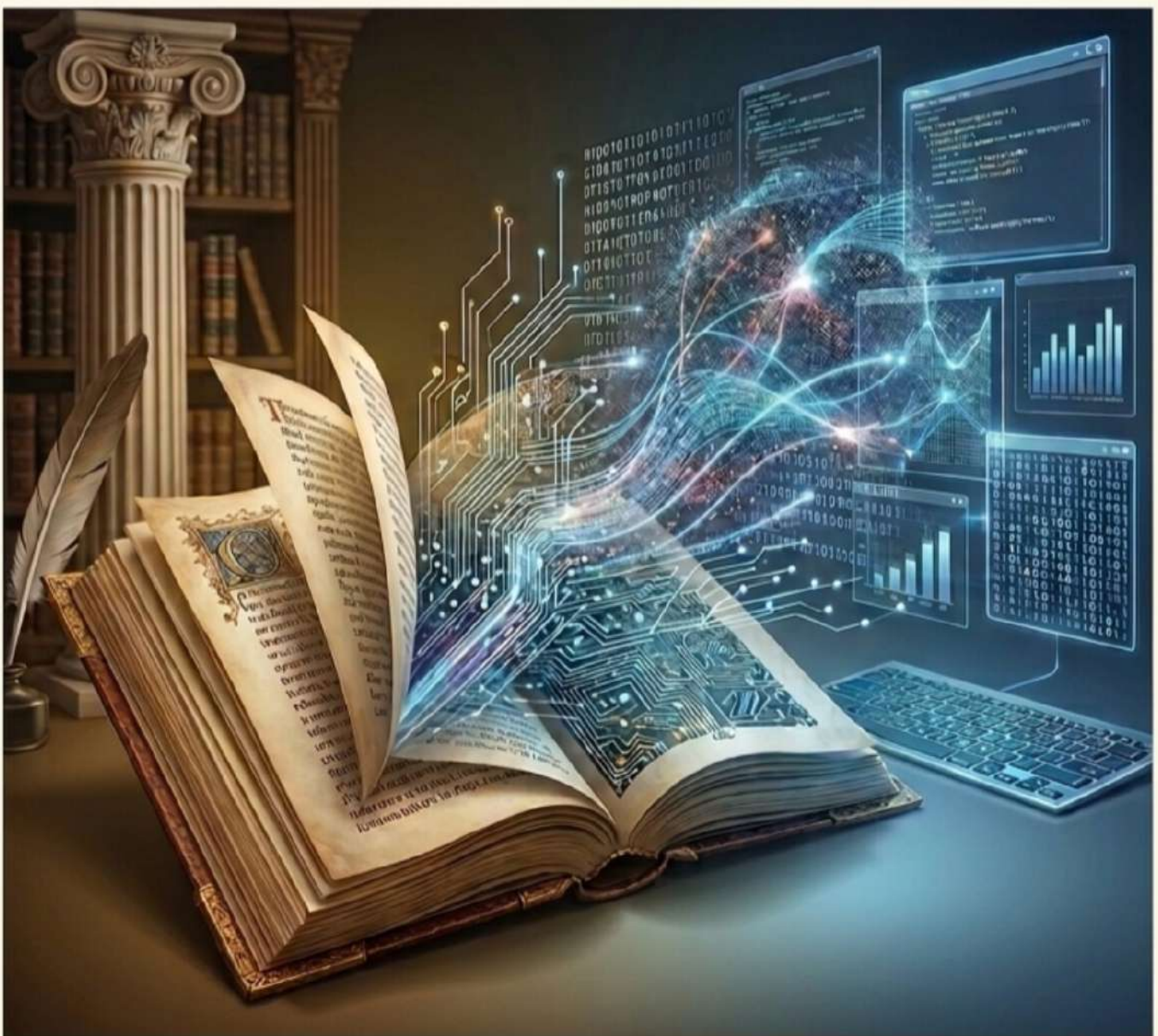




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# RHETORIC REWIRED

The Transformation of Literature and  
Language from Classical Discourse to  
Digital Paradigms



Edited by  
Dr. R. S. Suganth and Dr. A. Vimal



Dr. BGR  
Publications


# Rhetoric Rewired: The Transformation of Literature and Language from Classical Discourse to Digital Paradigms

**Editors**

**Dr. R. S. Suganth  
Dr. A. Vimal**

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### FOREWORD MESSAGE

I am glad to note that **Dr. R.S. Suganth**, Assistant Professor, Department of English, Vivekananda College, Agasteeswaram, Kanyakumari District has edited the book entitled **“Rhetoric Rewired: The Transformation of Literature and Language from Classical Discourse to Digital Paradigms”**. This book contains different chapters including Literature and English Language Teaching from classics to modern era.

The book traces how rhetoric evolves from classical foundations into the fragmented, interactive, and multimodal forms of digital communication. It emphasizes continuity with traditional persuasive aims while highlighting disruptions brought by hypertext, algorithms, and networked circulation. Beyond language and power, the book also explores how digital rhetoric reshapes identity construction, democratizes authorship, and complicates notions of authenticity in online discourse.

It situates these shifts within broader cultural and pedagogical contexts, urging the cultivation of critical digital literacies that encompass multimodality, technological fluency, and ethical awareness. By bridging historical theory with contemporary practice, the chapter provides scholars with a framework to rethink rhetorical studies and offers students a lens to engage with language as both inherited tradition and adaptive force in the digital age.



**Mr. C. Rajan**

Secretary

## Editor's Note

*Rhetoric Rewired: The Transformation of Literature and Language from Classical Discourse to Digital Paradigms* explores a profound shift in how language functions, evolves, and shapes human thought across time. From the structured eloquence of classical rhetoric to the dynamic, fragmented, and interactive forms of digital communication, this volume traces the changing contours of expression and meaning-making.

The essays collected here engage with foundational principles rooted in traditions, while critically examining how these principles are reinterpreted within contemporary digital spaces. The transition from oratory and print to screens and networks has not merely altered the medium of communication but has also reshaped the very nature of authorship, readership, and textual authority.

Contributors interrogate the role of social media, hyper textuality, and algorithm-driven content in redefining rhetorical strategies and literary forms. The boundaries between writer and reader blur, as participation, immediacy, and multimodality become central to discourse. At the same time, enduring questions about persuasion, ethics, and interpretation remain as relevant as ever.

This collection invites readers to reconsider literature not as a static body of texts but as a living, adaptive practice one that continues to respond to technological innovations and cultural shifts. By bridging classical insights with digital realities, *Rhetoric Rewired* offers a timely reflection on how language continues to reinvent itself in an increasingly connected world.

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# Breaking Barriers in Speech: Addressing Communication Anxiety in English Speaking

S. Sajna Beevi<sup>1\*</sup> and R. Abilasha<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar, Department of English, Holy Cross College (Autonomous), Nagercoil, Tamil Nadu, India

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor of English, Holy Cross College (Autonomous), Nagercoil, Tamil Nadu, India

\*Corresponding Author Email: [sajnahameed278@gmail.com](mailto:sajnahameed278@gmail.com)

## Abstract

*Speaking in English is often perceived as a complex phenomenon among students due to apprehension, the fear of making mistakes and peer criticism. Because both anxiety and lack of confidence stand as the highest psychological barrier that inhibits students from speaking English. This study explores the significance of effective oral communication for acquiring speaking skills and presentation techniques. It highlights the relevance of rhetorical speaking strategies to influence the audience and maintain clarity, coherence, and effective engagement. The study also focuses on overcoming communication anxiety and developing confidence in speech delivery. Several strategies are deployed for managing barriers such as anxiety and enhancing self-confidence through a structured approach. This paper further examines the challenges associated with oral communication and emphasizes the role of teachers and students in enhancing speaking skills. A speaker with a strong command over the language is highly acknowledged by the audience. It affirms that effective oral communication contributes to academic effectiveness and professional growth.*

**Keywords:** Oral Communication, Psychological Barrier, Anxiety, Self-confidence, Speaking Skills, Academic Growth, Strategies.

## Introduction

Oral communication signifies communication through verbal exchange of information. It represents individuals' conversation with each other, for academic or personal context. Various forms of oral communication are speeches, presentations, discussions etc. Oral communication hook-up with two important skills like listening and speaking. It indicates loud transparency and understanding interpersonal communication, and draws spontaneous

feedback without any delay. It stands as a corner stone of human interaction and encompasses a broad structure of daily conversations. It is hard to maintain oral communication in an effective manner, and it seems less authentic when it is compared to written communication. Effective speaking is not only about what is said by the speaker but also how it is said, as it enables with clarity, persuasion, and engagement. The paper suggests that English language anxiety is multidimensional and how it affects the English Language Learner's (ELL) in different situations.

### **Aim of the Study**

- Identify the effective approaches to handle the communication anxiety in English speaking.

### **Objectives**

- Highlights the role of teachers in handling speech anxiety inside the classroom.
- To examine the causes of communication anxiety among English language learners.

### **Literature Review**

N. Eleni Pappamihel [2002] in “Students and English Language Anxiety: Issues in the Mainstream Classroom” states the issues of English language anxiety in learning English as a second language. Knowledge of English Language skills is required to tackle the mainstream classrooms. On the other side, the support from the English language teachers is not doing well in the mainstream classes, because they cannot manage the situation with native English-speaking students. He said that, English language learners have less interaction in mainstream classrooms. He also gives the reason for those difficulties among the ELL students. The reasons include lack of teacher engagement, limited cognitive skills in English and affective environment in mainstream classrooms.

Verspoor et al., [2008] paper on “Variability in Second Language Development from a Dynamic Systems Perspective” gives the importance of studying intra-individual variability in Second language development. The authors adopt the framework of Dynamic Systems Theory. It develops the interaction with the environment and the principles of self-organization. They say that longitudinal studies gained through motivated measurements. They advocate the given variable development for related measurement.

Atkinson [2002] “Towards a Socio-Cognitive Approach to Second Language Acquisition,” develops a concept of second language acquisition from socio cognitive perspective. First, he develops a view of language and language acquisition as social phenomena. In this, he says language as a social practice. Secondly, he develops language as a socio cognitive phenomenon. He purposely tries to separate social and cognitive attributes. After analysis, he considers that both are inseparable. His paper gives an account of how socio cognitive approach helps in mastering oral communication.

McCroskey, J. C. [1977], “Oral Communication Apprehension: A Summary of Recent Theory and Research, Communication Apprehension” refers to the fear or anxiety associated with real or anticipated communication with others. According to him, Communication Apprehension on oral communication is defined as “an individual level of fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons”. It is frequently referred to communication anxiety and performance anxiety, and it occurs in both native and second language (L2) contexts. Individuals with high CA report fear, tension, sweating, increased heart rate, whenever they have to face oral communication activities.

### **Understanding Communication Anxiety**

Fear of speaking or communication anxiety can be caused by different sources. Mainly, it is caused due to fear of judgment or facing criticism from peers or teachers, lack of confidence, negative experiences with public speaking before. Generally, it is caused by expectations of perfection or the fear of making mistakes that can contribute to anxiety. If the speaker is unfamiliar with the topic, audience or the circumstances also lead to anxiety.

#### ➤ Signs and Symptoms

Communication anxiety manifest both physically and mentally. Physically, signs may experience increased shivering, heartbeat, sweating, dry mouth, trembling, or tense muscles. Mentally, the symptoms are running thoughts difficulty in concentrating, feeling down, and negative self-talk. Understanding these signs and finding their hidden causes is important for handle communication anxiety effectively. These symptoms vary according to the circumstances and the mental ability of the speaker.

### **Challenges and Factors Influencing Oral Communication**

- Bilingual Education
- Psychological barriers

- Teaching English as a subject and not as a Language
- Less exposure to English speaking environment
- Improper practice of LSRW Skills
- Difficulty in understanding grammar
- Lack of vocabulary competence
- Slangs and dialectal Phrases
- Mother Tongue Influence (MTI)
- Overcrowded classrooms
- Ineffective training for teachers
- Classroom situation and teaching Strategies

### **Role of Teachers**

The teacher plays a pivotal role in English language classrooms. They have the ability to shape the learners, influencing what an individual learner acquires inside the classroom environment. Young learners often perceive the instructor as someone who knows everything, so the teachers must be careful while speaking or teaching a language. There is a major difference between teaching an English language and teaching it as a subject. The students may imitate the teacher and at the same time, there is a possibility that learners may follow the mistake committed by the teacher. The role of the teacher is to correct grammatical errors, ensure accuracy, setting the objectives of the progression, and planning the activities. Teachers are responsible for addressing the issues faced by the learner as well as creating opportunities for them to present their skills on public platforms. The language learners should not learn a language as a subject, instead they need to understand, and acquire the language. Accuracy and fluency in language is inevitable to express one's own ideas. In this case, teachers play a crucial role in correcting the mistakes and enhancing learner's accuracy and fluency. The objectives of language learning can be framed by the language instructor. Sometimes learners can set personal goals, but in general teachers decide the objectives of the course based on the student's proficiency level. In this aspect of mastering oral communication, the learners consider the teacher as the most responsible figure in the classroom.

### **Responsibility of Students**

The students have more responsibility than the teacher in language learning, both inside and outside the classroom. Nowadays, students are more capable and equipped in choosing

their learning process, including how to learn and what to learn. In the classroom, teachers play a major role in helping learners acquire the language, but outside the classroom, learners take greater responsibility for applying what they have learned through practice. The students can watch English programmes on TV and speak in English whenever chance arise in order to enrich their oral communication, as they acquire the language in a subconscious or in a natural way. In this case, the students have more responsibility in learning a language and the aspects involved in this category include the evaluation of learning and deciding on the outside class learning activities.

### Strategies to Reduce Anxiety

- **Breathing and Relaxation Techniques:** Taking deep breathing exercises help to calm down the nervous system and reduce the causes of psychological issues like anxiety, fear etc. It pays a way for releasing tension in a positive way.
- **Positive Visualization:** Visualizing favourable result and positive events helps to promote confidence and reduce anxiety. Visualize a successful interaction instead of thinking about the flopped experiences.

### Building Confidence

- **Self-Affirmation Techniques:** A self-affirmation technique brings a positive reinforcement and helps to promote self-worth and confidence level.
- **The Role of Preparation:** The role of preparation is important for obtaining success by enhance the challenges. It includes well planning, organizing and practice that set a clear goal of good atmosphere for speaking.
- **Using Feedback for Improvement:** By receiving instant feedback from the perceiver helps to improve the faults promptly and it generally constructs a positive way of growth and adapt easily to the changing circumstances.

### Managing the Speaking Environment

- **Familiarizing with the Venue:** Speaker should familiarize with the layout, acoustics, lighting, and other technical equipment by visiting the venue. This familiarity helps to reduce anxiety and guarantee effortless presentation during the speech.
- **Arranging the Space for Comfort:** Arranging a comfort space for speaker is essential and the area of comfort started from seating arrangements, placement of podium, and

provide sufficient lighting and ventilation. A healthy environment comforts the speakers; they feel more at ease and create a rapport with the audience.

- **Dealing with Unexpected Challenges:** Speakers often face unexpected issues, technical glitches, distractions, unexpected reactions, questions from the audience, as it is a crucial part of their performances. Speaker has always been aware of alternate options, plans, includes backup slides or other presentation methods, and upholds dignity and adaptability during the unexpected moments. Speaking environment is effectively managed with proactive preparation, detailed attention, and maturity to tackle unexpected situations, assure a confident and successful presentation experience.

### **Public Speaking Essentials and Techniques of Presentation**

Public speaking begins by understanding its significance and frame with clear cut goals. It lies with well-structured presentation which holds an essential introduction, a descriptive body, and a critical conclusion. Effective techniques like use of voice modulation, body language, and visual aids helps to strengthen the presentation. Speakers get themselves engaged with their audience by knowing their interests, needs and shape up the message in a suitable manner. Presentation is more important, by managing content development, rehearsal, and logical development to grasp the interest of audience.

### **Public Speaking and Its Significance**

Public speaking is related to the process of giving a speech to a live audience with the supreme goal of entertaining, persuading, sharing information. It describes different forms of communication, from formal to informal presentations, and it is an important skill in many aspects of life. Effective public speaking depends on how the speaker engage the audience, convey messages effectively, clearly, and confidently to maintain the presentation. Mastery of speaking skill helps in improving one's ability to influence others, present ideas effectively, and brings a positive attitude towards speech and it gradually brings a professional image. Public speaking not only helps to impose personal development but also plays a crucial part in career advancement and making it as an essential part in today's world.

Public speaking is significant for various reasons. It acts as an integral part of effective communication, by allowing individuals to convey ideas and information clearly to others. In professional settings, strong public speaking skills are essential for presentations, meetings,

and networking, often leading to career advancement and opportunities. Public speaking helps to develop leadership and improve the confidence level, as the ability to connect the thoughts and influence an audience.

## Conclusion

Oral communication is a two-way process that requires a speaker and a listener. It is most effective when the sender has good speaking skills and the receiver has good listening skills. Hearing is different from listening, in that hearing is the physical ability to hear sound and occurs unconsciously, while listening is to hear something with thoughtful and close attention. Oral communication in public speaking is a versatile skill that suggests and shows the speaking skill transparently and clearly by using visual aids, body language and managing voice modulation. It is essential to create an impactful presentation to overcome the anxiety and promote self-confidence. By thorough mastering these skills, speakers help to develop personal as well as professional growth to enable the audience to achieve their communication goals.

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# Bridging the Skills Gap: Reimagining English Language Teaching for Engineering Graduates in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

A. Delbio

*Assistant Professor, Department of English, St. Xavier's Catholic College of Engineering,  
Chunkankadai*

*Corresponding Author Email: [delbiogeorge2021@gmail.com](mailto:delbiogeorge2021@gmail.com)*

## **Abstract**

*In the contemporary globalized and technology-driven landscape, engineering graduates are expected to possess not only technical expertise but also a high level of proficiency in English communication. However, a persistent gap exists between the linguistic competence of engineering students and the expectations of the professional world. This paper examines the limitations of traditional English Language Teaching (ELT) practices in engineering colleges and explores innovative pedagogical approaches that can bridge this gap. By analyzing methods such as English for Specific Purposes (ESP), Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), project-based learning, and technology-integrated instruction, the study emphasizes the importance of contextualized and learner-centered teaching. It also highlights the role of continuous assessment and communication-focused training in enhancing students' employability skills. The paper concludes that a systematic transformation in ELT practices is essential to equip engineering graduates with the communicative competence required for global professional environments.*

**Keywords:** *English Language Teaching, Engineering Education, Communication Skills, Employability, ESP, TBLT, Technology Integration*

## **Introduction**

English has established itself as the global language of science, technology, and professional communication. In engineering education, the importance of English extends beyond academic success to include employability, career advancement, and participation in global professional networks. Engineering graduates are often required to present technical ideas, collaborate with diverse teams, and engage in international projects, all of which demand a strong command of English.

Despite its importance, many engineering students struggle to communicate effectively in English, particularly in speaking and writing. This issue is especially evident in regions where English is taught as a second language and where exposure to real-life communication in English is limited. Students may have adequate knowledge of grammar and vocabulary, yet they often lack the confidence and fluency required for professional communication.

The root of this problem lies in the traditional approaches to English Language Teaching, which prioritize theoretical knowledge over practical application. These methods fail to address the communicative needs of engineering students, resulting in a significant gap between academic learning and industry expectations. This paper seeks to explore how ELT can be reimagined to bridge this gap and to prepare students for the demands of the modern workplace.

### **Understanding the Skills Gap in Engineering Education**

The concept of a “skills gap” refers to the disparity between the abilities possessed by graduates and the competencies required by employers. In the context of engineering education, this gap is particularly evident in communication skills. Employers consistently emphasize the importance of effective communication, teamwork, and interpersonal skills, yet many graduates fall short in these areas.

One of the primary reasons for this gap is the disproportionate emphasis on technical subjects in engineering curricula. While technical knowledge is undoubtedly essential, the lack of focus on soft skills, particularly communication, limits students’ overall development. English courses are often treated as peripheral subjects, leading to reduced student engagement and motivation.

Another contributing factor is the diversity of students’ linguistic backgrounds. Engineering colleges often admit students from both urban and rural areas, resulting in significant variations in English proficiency. Students from non-English-medium backgrounds may face additional challenges, including limited vocabulary, pronunciation difficulties, and lack of confidence.

Furthermore, the absence of a communicative environment restricts students’ opportunities to practice English. In many cases, students rely on their native language for daily interactions, which hinders the development of fluency. This lack of exposure, combined with anxiety and fear of making mistakes, further exacerbates the problem.

## **Limitations of Traditional ELT Practices**

Traditional ELT practices in engineering colleges are largely based on teacher-centered approaches that emphasize grammar, translation, and rote learning. While these methods may help students acquire theoretical knowledge, they do not adequately develop communicative competence.

One of the key limitations of these approaches is the lack of interaction in the classroom. Students are often passive recipients of information rather than active participants in the learning process. This limits their opportunities to practice speaking and listening skills, which are crucial for effective communication.

Another issue is the reliance on standardized examinations that focus primarily on written skills. These assessments do not capture students' ability to communicate in real-life situations, resulting in a mismatch between academic performance and practical competence. Moreover, traditional methods fail to connect language learning with students' academic and professional needs. Engineering students require specific language skills, such as technical writing, report preparation, and presentation skills, which are not adequately addressed in conventional ELT curricula.

## **Reimagining English Language Teaching for Engineering Students**

To bridge the skills gap, it is essential to adopt innovative and learner-centered approaches to ELT. These approaches should focus on practical communication skills, contextual learning, and student engagement.

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is one such approach that tailors' language instruction to the specific needs of learners. In the context of engineering education, ESP focuses on teaching language skills that are directly relevant to students' academic and professional requirements. This includes technical vocabulary, report writing, and presentation skills. By aligning language learning with real-world applications, ESP enhances student motivation and engagement.

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is another effective approach that emphasizes learning through meaningful tasks. In this method, students engage in activities such as group discussions, role plays, and problem-solving tasks that simulate real-life situations. This not only improves their language skills but also fosters collaboration and critical thinking.

Project-based learning further enhances the learning experience by integrating language and technical knowledge. Students are encouraged to work on projects that require them to research, analyze, and present information in English. This approach provides opportunities for authentic language use and helps students develop both communication and professional skills.

### **Role of Technology in Enhancing ELT**

The integration of technology has transformed the landscape of language teaching and learning. Digital tools and online platforms provide new opportunities for interactive and personalized learning. Multimedia resources, such as videos and podcasts, help improve listening and comprehension skills. Online discussion forums and collaborative tools enable students to engage in meaningful communication beyond the classroom. Language learning applications offer exercises in grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, allowing students to practice at their own pace.

Virtual learning environments also facilitate blended learning, combining traditional classroom instruction with online activities. This approach enhances flexibility and accessibility, making learning more engaging and effective. Moreover, technology enables immediate feedback, which is essential for language development. Tools such as speech recognition software and automated writing evaluation systems help students identify and correct their mistakes, thereby improving their proficiency.

### **Importance of Communication Skills Laboratories**

Communication skills laboratories play a vital role in developing students' language proficiency. These labs provide a structured environment for practicing listening and speaking skills through audio-visual materials and interactive activities.

In a language lab, students can engage in exercises such as pronunciation practice, listening comprehension, and simulated conversations. These activities help improve fluency, accuracy, and confidence.

The use of technology in language labs also allows for individualized learning. Students can work at their own pace and receive personalized feedback, which enhances the effectiveness of the learning process.

## Assessment and Evaluation in Modern ELT

Assessment plays a crucial role in shaping the learning process. Traditional examination methods, which focus primarily on written skills, are inadequate for evaluating communication competence. Therefore, it is necessary to adopt alternative assessment methods that emphasize practical language use.

Continuous assessment is one such method that evaluates students' performance over time. This includes activities such as presentations, group discussions, and assignments. Peer evaluation and self-assessment also encourage students to reflect on their learning and identify areas for improvement.

Portfolio assessment provides a comprehensive view of students' progress by documenting their work over a period of time. This method not only assesses their language skills but also highlights their ability to apply these skills in different contexts.

## Discussion

The analysis presented in this paper highlights the need for a paradigm shift in ELT practices in engineering education. Innovative approaches such as ESP, TBLT, and project-based learning have proven to be effective in enhancing students' communication skills.

The integration of technology further enriches the learning experience by providing interactive and flexible learning opportunities. However, the successful implementation of these approaches requires institutional support, curriculum redesign, and teacher training.

Teachers play a crucial role in facilitating this transformation. They must adopt learner-centered strategies, create a supportive learning environment, and encourage active participation. Institutions must also invest in resources such as language labs and digital tools to support effective teaching and learning.

## Recommendations

To bridge the skills gap in engineering education, several measures can be implemented. Integrating English language training with technical subjects can make learning more relevant and meaningful. Introducing compulsory communication skills courses can ensure that students receive adequate training in language skills.

Encouraging interactive and student-centered teaching methods can enhance engagement and participation. Providing professional development opportunities for teachers can help them adopt modern ELT practices. Investing in language labs and digital resources can further support effective learning.

Creating opportunities for real-life communication, such as internships, presentations, and group projects, can help students apply their language skills in practical contexts.

## Conclusion

The ability to communicate effectively in English is a critical skill for engineering graduates in the 21st century. However, traditional ELT practices have not been successful in developing this competence, resulting in a significant skills gap.

Reimagining English Language Teaching through innovative, learner-centered approaches is essential to address this issue. By integrating language learning with technical education, leveraging technology, and adopting practical assessment methods, institutions can enhance students' communicative competence and employability. Ultimately, bridging the skills gap requires a collaborative effort from educators, institutions, and students. By embracing change and innovation, engineering education can produce graduates who are not only technically proficient but also effective communicators in a globalized world.

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# Orientalism as a Discourse: Power Nexus in Colonial and Postcolonial Context through Edward Said's Views

Binny Binoy<sup>1\*</sup> and Subramania Pillai R<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Research Scholar, Department of English, Noorul Islam Centre for Higher Education, Kumaracoil, Tamil Nadu, India*

<sup>2</sup>*Professor, Department of English, Noorul Islam Centre for Higher Education, Kumaracoil, Tamil Nadu, India*

\*Corresponding Author Email: [binnybinoy11@gmail.com](mailto:binnybinoy11@gmail.com)

## Abstract

*The chapter examines Edward Said's concept of Orientalism as a powerful discourse that shaped colonial ideology and practice. Drawing on Said's theoretical insights, the chapter explores how the West constructed the Orient as an inferior, exotic and subordinate "Other" in order to justify political domination and cultural control. The chapter highlights the close relationship between knowledge and power in colonial contexts, that demonstrate Orientalist representations available in the world is not neutral descriptions but strategic discussions. The chapter analyses Orientalism as a discursive formation and underscores its role in legitimising colonial hegemony. It tries to explain the relevance of Said's views as relevant even after decades as that continue operating cultural domination and questioning representational power in the neo-colonial world.*

**Keywords:** *Orientalism, Orient, Occident, neo-colonialism, othering, discourse etc.*

## Introduction

Postcolonialism is a stream of thought discussing the upsurge in the political, historical, economic as well as the literary arenas of the formerly colonized nations, after decolonization. The term 'post- coloniality' operates at two levels— first, as a historical marker to the period of decolonization and second, as a scholarly discipline influenced by post- structuralism and post- deconstruction. The emergence and establishment of the aesthetics of post- colonialism can be traced back to Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* in which he discusses postcolonial aesthetics and Edward Said's *Orientalism* that focuses on its theory part. It is important to note that much of the theoretical assumptions of postcolonialism are attributed to *The Empire Writes Back* by the Australian trio: Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin.

Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* focuses on the “colonized psychology which transforms into three phases: assimilation, remembrance and the creation of a new reality.” Instead of focusing on an isolated subject like Fanon has attempted, Said directly questions the existence and authenticity of the concept called Orientalism. Edward Said, through his simple, straight forward and logically solid writings, has already created a unique standpoint regarding Orientalism, which has welcomed adulations, controversies as well as criticism at the same time. Bernard Lewis finds that “Orientalism is a text with a thesis” but Charles Paul Freund criticized the text and its author for “the harsh interpretation of the western attitude” to the east. However, *Orientalism* remains as a classic for taking up the courage to debunk most of the European arguments and exposing the imperial agenda hidden under the composition of the concept called Orient.

Said begins his introduction of *Orientalism* by explaining an anecdote from a French journalist's experience. The latter was visiting Beirut, the capital of Lebanon during the 1975-76 Civil War. The land was dishevelled and the journalist noted down “it had once seemed to belong to..... the Orient of Chateaubriant and Nerval.” The disillusionment projected out of these words are normal as the journalist has mentioned as a French person and moreover the representative of Europe. As far as the Franco- British powers are concerned, the Orient is a land of exotic beings, place of romance, haunting memories, landscapes and remarkable experiences. It is natural that the journalist felt gutted at the present situation of the Orient. But it is important to note that the concept of Orient as a romantic place and exotic beings is the European representation through literary texts.

Edward Said says that Orientalism as put forwarded by the Occident cannot be neglected or rejected as imaginary because it is based on their reality formed out of various relationships they have with the east in terms of politics, economy, trade and even colonial expansion. The Occidental reality of the Orient won't be as same as the Oriental conditions in real. In order to prove the changes in perception of Orientalism, Said says that American perspective of the Orient will be entirely different from that of Franco- British powers, since they are very much accustomed to the far- east (China and Japan) as well as the near east (middle east), through various exchanges in the fields of economy, power, arms and trade. Therefore, Orientalism varies accordingly.

The European construction of Orient is important because it contributes largely to define the material civilization and culture of the Occident as the perfect “other.” Said is problematizing the postcolonial concept of “othering” to substantiate the idea as the Occidental complex to attain superiority over the Orient demands a foil to illuminate the qualities assumed that they have. Occident moulds an Orient of their imagination (or sometimes based on their realities) which is full of what they consider as inferior. Then only they can attain superiority over the east. By constant reiterating the idea of “less significant Orient” through literary representations in various texts, the east also believed that Orient is inferior to Occident. The sad reality is that it is imprinted on the Oriental definition of self which embattled generations in the global power scale.

### **The Three Definitions of Orientalism**

Edward Said re-reads Orientalism using three different lenses.

#### **i. Orientalism as an academic discipline**

Orientalism is widely studied as an academic discipline across the globe. According to Said “anyone who teaches, describes, settles in or do research on Orient can be termed as an Orientalist and what he or she is doing can be considered as Orientalism.” This is primarily an academic approach which is textual and meant for considering Orientalism as a subject to learn and earn a degree. This approach is more or less rejected by post- modern thinkers.

#### **ii. Orientalism as a style of thought**

Orientalism can be considered as a style of thought based on the ontological and epistemological distinction made between the Orient and the Occident. Many scholars are of the opinion that the source of explaining Orientalism is nowhere but surprisingly in the Occident. The distinction between Orient and Occident defines both; whatever is not Occident is Orient and vice- versa. This is a more theoretical and scholarly definition but it lacks practical significance.

#### **iii. Orientalism as a corporate institution:**

Said elaborates on the third definition by stating that it can well be understood using the first two definitions. He states that Orientalism is a corporate institution for dealing with the Orient. Orientalism should be considered as a discourse to understand

its conceptual framework. The idea of discourse is from the great scholar Michael Foucault; according to him, “an idea should be analysed using the circumstances in which it occurred and the situations through which it acquired the current relevance.” By doing a discursive analysis of Orientalism, one cannot omit the presence of Occident in creating its “other.” This concept of orientalism is a vast one as it incorporates the historical, political, ideological and economic policies which contribute to the idea behind the construct of Orient. This is considered by many scholars as a direct approach to Orientalism.

### **Approaching Orientalism: Methodology**

Historically and culturally, there lies a whole lot of qualitative and quantitative difference between Orient (Especially India and the Bible lands) and Occident (particularly the Franco-British alliance). By the end of the second world war, USA gained supremacy over the world. But the alliance USA had with Orient is different from that with the Occident. By pointing out the historical and political power plays to explain the theoretical foundations of Orientalism, Said swims against the currents of American formalism which isolates text from context. According to him Orientalism cannot be explained amidst a set of scholarly text but with an alternate methodological approach.

According to the famous Italian philosopher Giambattista Vico, “history and culture are man-made and what men can know is what they have made.” In the light of this observation, what the present article tries to prove is that the concept of Orient and Occident are the sum total of human perspectives or the result of a finite set of metanarratives gathered out of infinite marginalized perspectives. Orient and Occident are not primordial whatever the Occident experienced from the relations with Orient create it and the geographical extremes of eastern and western plateau contribute to it. Therefore, Orient and Occident are not opposing forces but entities consecutively depend upon each other.

Benjamin Disraeli, the famous Victorian political thinker quotes Orient as “not only a bright career but a consuming passion for the youngsters of the west.” The relationship between Orient and Occident is always of power, domination and varying degrees of hegemony. K. M. Panikkar in his *Asia and Western Dominance* quotes that “Orient is orientalized not only it was discovered to be the Orient, but also because it could be submitted to being made Oriental.”

Panikkar's brilliant examination of the orientalism shows how the West justifies their ideas of the East to the world and so made it universal. Said is giving an anecdote of 19<sup>th</sup> century French novelist Flaubert's encounter with an Egyptian woman Kuchuk Hanem. Hanem was so shy and belonged to the least rung of the power hierarchy. Hamen repeatedly became the influential model of Oriental women through his novels. It underlines the fact that Orientalism is not a set of lies or myth but the perceptions of Occident about the Orient.

The influence of Antonio Gramsci in Said is visible in the work as he quotes Gramsci's idea of 'hegemony' to substantiate his ideas of Orientalism. Gramsci divides society into two: Civil and Political. The civil society consists of "voluntary institutions like school and families whereas the political society consists of army, police and bureaucracy." The political society always stands for direct domination but in a consented form. This is what Gramsci called as 'hegemony,' which is domination by consent. From there Said finds that cultural hegemony works best to explain the formation of Orientalism. He works out a link between Orientalism and a collective understanding of Europe proposed by British historian Denys Hay. Hay mentioned the alignment of Europeans against East as "Us" against "Them." This shows how a native understands the cultural hegemony behind European agenda of making the rest of the world believe that the geographically opposite nations are beyond their boundaries of consideration and they are being the "Other" attributing the all traits they want to nullify from being "Us." Thus, formed Orientalism as a result of positional superiority of the Occident.

Occident deals with Orient in a way that they analyse, make statements without consent from the latter. As Orient had lesser exposure than the Occident, the whole world accepts their narratives as real and this has made the Occident defines Orient as a land of exotic beings, haunted landscape and remarkable experiences through the concept of orientalism. Many of the Western scholars who wrote about Orient underpins a stout racial attitude of the Eastern society at the bottom level. Said even provides concrete examples of such writers like Silvestre de Sacy in his *Chrestomathie Arabe*, Edward William Lane in *Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, Steven Marcus in *The Lustful Turks* and many more.

Said is clear about the need to fix a research approach in order to proceed a study on Orientalism. There are two approaches: general as well as particular. The general approach deals with the idea with respect to certain theories such as imperialism and racism. The

particular approach opens up the way to Orientalism through works produced by select authors like William Jones, Nerval and Flaubert. These approaches will meet at some points as they lack accuracy and orientation. The general approach will definitely be coarsely polemic of the West and the particular approach will miss out the conceptual framework that is rather significant in such research. Therefore, Said suggests an approach that is rooted in the contemporary reality of the researcher, instead of digging deep in historical events and texts.

In order to fix the framework of research on Orientalism, one has to be aware of certain ideas:

**i. The distinction between pure and political knowledge**

There is always a tendency existing in the world to divide knowledge into pure and political. Said exemplifies that research about Shelley or Shakespeare has no direct political connection whereas Soviet studies or Chinese Civil Issues carry political ideology in it. Said argues that “no man is devoid of his immediate political circumstances.” Similarly, every scholar has beliefs, customs and social factors based on which their ideologies evolve. Nobody can detach a researcher from immediate social situations which shaped and continues shaping their reality. If that is an acceptable argument, no human is carrying pure knowledge alone. Pure and political knowledge are part of the continuum and every scholar carry both. Even if a literary analysis of Shelley or Shakespeare appear as pure knowledge, it carries the political knowledge of the author deep within. Thus, Said brilliantly collapses the dichotomy of pure and political knowledge.

Nowadays, the term ‘political’ carries the implication that it is a tool to discredit anything that claims to have supra-political objectivity. But this isn’t true. For example, Russia is not in a good power-relation with the Occident, which is evident in all the western research carried out on Tolstoy’s texts. Undoubtedly Tolstoy’s works are dissected with political power ‘knife’ as such works are funded by the West. This is where Gramsci’s idea of political society reaches out to civil society where the frontier between the two disappears. This is same with the studies happening in Orient as most of the approaches of research are of western origin and units, a scholar can never be unbiased as the calcified notions of positional superiority is evident in Western knowledge itself. Thus, there is no wonder in representing Orient as the famished, underprivileged “Other” of the Occident.

The power struggle behind Orient and Occident is not only political but also cultural. There is always a sense of cultural superiority behind every Western citizen over those who belong to the Third World, as the vestiges of colonization are still in their minds. For example, the liberal humanists like Carlyle, Newman, Dickens and John Stuart Mill have depicted the East in their works as a space different from where they live in. John Stuart Mill in his *On Liberty and Representative Government* proposed that “there are certain strategies for civilized society which cannot be applied to nations like India as they are civilizationally if not rationally inferior.” Though decolonization happens outside, it should happen in the minds. Even Carl Marx gets criticized by Said for his communist ideas which has anti- Orient undertones. All these experiences show that cultural inferiority still exists in the minds of the Third World citizens as they are also not wholly free from the thought of being colonized once. Therefore, Said concludes the idea that Orientalism is always and unapologetically both political and cultural artefact which cannot exist in archival vacuum.

## ii. **The Methodological Question:**

For every attempt to analyse a discourse, it is important to set a starting point first. But for studies on Orientalism, it is practically impossible to set one as there is no concrete starting point to the vast idea of Orientalism. Although, a beginning has to be made to carry on the research further. Said is of the opinion that “it is foolish to attempt an encyclopaedic narrative history of Orientalism. Because there are grand deals of materials available and he is not interested in a narrative study as his political and descriptive interests don’t match with it. Moreover, there are plenty of critical texts available on the Orient- Occident power-relations. His approach is neither adapting the narrative history nor digging for the actuality behind it. It is all about the internal consistency of the idea called Orientalism and his ideas about Orient.

There were various attempts to study Orientalism from 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards as Franco-British alliance had made attempts of the same. German scholars like Silvestre de Sacy had also contributed to the discourse. Post-war era witnessed the upsurge of USA to the epitome of socio-political powers. The attempts from Occident to discuss Orientalism is still on board. E. S. Schleifer’s *The Fall of Jerusalem* reinterprets the origins of romanticism by critiquing Coleridge, Browning and George Eliot. Like

Schleifer, Said is not only after the political and literary developments in Orient but also with the explicit colonial mindset behind Franco-British strategies to define it and how it is different from American Orientalism.

After fixing the methodology for carrying out a study in Orientalism, there will definitely be an immediate urgency to delimit the research area. Since the topic of Orientalism has material prosperity, it is thoughtful to go with Althusser's idea of "problematizing a specific, determinate unity of texts which can be fixed after a great deal of discussion over it." Therefore, Said opts to start from the British, French and American experiences of the Orient, their driving forces behind viewing Orient as the "Other" and the quality of such narration. He even cuts down the far East including Japan, China and India and focuses on Arabs to represent the Orient. By the way he admits that a great part of both Orient and Occident get omitted not because of less importance but to delimit the study and get pure experience of going deep into the selected discourse. He confesses that without considering the political power relations among India, China, Egypt with Germanic, Italian, Russian, Spanish and Portugal powers, Orientalism is incomplete

### iii. **Historical and Personal Authority of Orientalism:**

Said's approach to Orientalism demands an appropriate tool to study the discourse. He proposes two tools for that: Strategic Location and Strategic Formation. Strategic Location is a tool used to find out authority by analysing the author's position in a text, based on the materials used to define Orientalism. In simple terms, any author who engages with Orientalism can either be an Orient or an Occident. Meanwhile, Strategic Formation is a tool to group the texts on Orientalism based on its density and referential capability. In simple terms, anyone who thinks of Orientalism should have formed a strategic stand to assess it. Sometimes, these tools may alter the purpose of the endeavour. As Said points out, even Homer is corrupted by this bias. Every privileged author sees Orient as the strategic "Other" and they can only see the discourse from its surface structure. Then there can be Darwinian Orient, Freudian Orient, Shakespearean Orient, but not the real Orient.

## Conclusion

In short, Said's conceptualisation of Orientalism as a discourse reveals the inadequacies existing in describing Orientalism. By constructing Orient as passive, irrational, backward and inferior, the Occident reinforces a hierarchical relation with the former. His analysis demonstrates how discourse operates as a powerful instrument in shaping cultural perceptions and institutional practices, thereby exposing the close connection between knowledge and power in colonial contexts. His insights continue to remain relevant in interrogating contemporary forms of representation, cultural domination and neo-colonial power structures.

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# Resistance to Change and Technological Modern World: Re- Reading A Man Called Ove

Aswathy Raj

Assistant Professor, Department of English, Sree Narayana College, Chengannur, Alappuzha,  
Kerala, India

Corresponding Author Email: [aswathyraj08@gmail.com](mailto:aswathyraj08@gmail.com)

## Abstract

*Digital divide remains a critical barrier to the digital inclusion of older adults. This study investigates the theme of resistance to change especially the digital exclusion and loneliness in A Man Called Ove by Frederik Backman. Acceleration of digital transformation often creates generation inequalities, especially in elderly population. The study posits that the technology adoption inertia is not a personal trait but a socially constructed response to exclusionary technological systems. This paper highlights how literary works anticipate digital marginalization, particularly among older adults.*

**Keywords:** *Grey Digital divide, Technology adoption inertia, Digital Exclusion, Ageing, Technological Modernity*

## Introduction

The modern era marked by a whirlwind of digitalization, in all aspects of life. These advancements promise efficiency and connectivity in governance, healthcare, communication, etc. But at the same it becomes a cause for new types of inequality like age-based digital divide. “Digital exclusion Broadly defined, is where a section of the population has continuing unequal access and capacity to use Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) that are essential to fully participate in society” (Schejter, 2015; Warren, 2007)

The concept of grey digital divide points out the significant gap of elderly people to access digital technology, which results social exclusion, reduced access to essential services like Healthcare, E Governance, Digital Communications etc.

A Man Called Ove portrays the story of a 59-year-old grumpy widower who strictly adheres to traditional craftsmanship and order which puts him at odds with a society which

swiftly accepting digitalization. The novel strongly focusses on the Ove's grief and social reintegration through his neighbours, which illustrates the psychological toll of technological displacement. Ove always under the impression that modern innovations make unnecessary complications to the day today life. The novel also highlights the tension between a disappearing manual era and the increasing automation.

## **Literature Review**

### **The Grey Digital Divide**

The concept of the “grey digital divide” refers to disparities in digital access and usage among older adults. Studies indicate that this divide extends beyond access to include digital skills, motivation, and outcomes (Mubarak & Suomi, 2022)

Recent research studies highlights that grey digital divide not only depend on technological barriers but also on some psychological barriers too. Elderly people face technological anxiety like fear of using digital devices like smartphones, computers etc. They also worry about making mistakes which leads to avoidance of technology altogether. Lack of self-confidence, fear of security concerns, cognitive overload, inferiority, resistance to change, etc are some other major reasons.

He is struggling with grief over the loss of his wife Sonya. The novel depicts Ove who struggles to adapt a speedily changing modern world. He is a man who struggles to adapt changes and wishes to adhere on traditional values. He rejects modern technology and bureaucratic systems. His frustration with automated processes, digital systems, and institutional rules symbolizes the discomfort many elderly individuals experience in a digitalized society. This resistance is not merely stubbornness but stems from a sense of displacement in a world that increasingly values technological competence over lived experience.

The novel also highlights how modernization can create emotional and social barriers. Ove's inability to adapt to technological changes contributes to his isolation, reflecting the realities of the contemporary digital divide. As society moves toward online communication, digital services, and automation, individuals like Ove often feel excluded and disconnected.

## Resistance to Technology and the Digital Divide: A Textual Analysis

Ove's technological resistance in *A Man Called Ove* can be seen as a cross-section of the broader discourse surrounding the grey digital divide. Ove's continual rejection of contemporary digital infrastructure manifests a psychological and structural response to a socio-technical landscape that marginalizes elderly persons.

One of the most specific cases of technological resistance is Ove's dislike for computers and modern devices. He repeatedly says these systems are unnecessarily complex and unreliable. His reluctance to computer can be seen in the first chapter of the novel *A Man Called Ove Buys A Computer that is Not a Computer* (Backman 1-4) His disposition can be identified as technological anxiety, manifesting in a profound sense of frustration toward modern digital tools.

Ove's reference to bureaucratic authorities as "white shirts," reinforces his resistance to institutional digitalization. Ove sees these authorities as impersonal systems governed by rules, documentation and increasingly depending on automated processes. Ove's frustration is evident when he dismisses them as "people who talk about things they don't understand" (Backman, 72)

Another significant instance of resistance is Ove's strict adherence to traditional rules and methods within his neighbourhood. He demands to maintain order through physical inspection and direct action rather than relying on modern systems of management. "He checked that the recycling was done properly and that no one had driven where driving was forbidden." (Backman 3-5)

Another example for resistance to change can be pointed as Ove critiques that the younger generations are incompetent because their over reliance on technology and this severely eroded their problem-solving skills found in previous generations.

The protagonist's attachment to traditional objects like his staunch allegiance to Saab cars symbolizes his resistance to technological modernity. It reflects his adherence to tradition and deep rejection of technological change happening in the society.

Even though Ove is a man who is sceptical of modern digital infrastructures, his transition towards social participation dilutes his resistance to digital infrastructures. His social transformation suggests that human relationships can act as a vital bridge, reducing resistance to technology and making adaptation easier.

## Conclusion

This study highlights that resistance to technology in *A Man Called Ove* is not merely an individual characteristic but a reflection of broader structural and psychological barriers associated with the digital divide. The novel effectively captures the challenges faced by elderly individuals in adapting to a rapidly digitizing world. By emphasizing the role of human connection, the text suggests that social inclusion is essential for overcoming technological exclusion. Thus, literary works such as *A Man Called Ove* provide valuable insights into contemporary issues of digital inequality and ageing.

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# Wounded Subjectivity: Adolescence, Memory, and Psychic Fragmentation in *The Golden Notebook* by Doris Lessing

Adline Aruna. F<sup>1\*</sup> and A. Roselin Mary<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar, Department of English, Fatima College, Madurai, Tamil Nadu, India.

<sup>2</sup>Former Head & Associate Professor, The Research Centre of English, Fatima College, Madurai, Tamil Nadu, India.

\*Corresponding Author Email: [aruna@sxcce.edu.in](mailto:aruna@sxcce.edu.in)

## Abstract

*This paper explores the concept of wounded subjectivity in *The Golden Notebook* by Doris Lessing, focusing on the interrelated themes of adolescence, memory, and psychic fragmentation. The novel presents a complex psychological portrait of Anna Wulf, whose divided consciousness reflects the instability of identity in the modern world. Through the use of multiple notebooks, the narrative symbolizes the fragmentation of the self, revealing the difficulty of integrating personal, political, and emotional experiences into a unified identity. The study examines how formative experiences rooted in adolescence continue to influence adult subjectivity, creating unresolved tensions and emotional dissonance. Memory is treated as a non-linear and often disruptive force that resists coherence, contributing to the fractured nature of the self. Drawing on psychoanalytic and trauma-based perspectives, the paper argues that the narrative structure itself mirrors the workings of a divided psyche struggling to reconcile conflicting realities. Additionally, the paper highlights the role of gender and socio-cultural expectations in intensifying psychological fragmentation, situating Anna's experiences within a broader feminist framework. The attempt to unify the fragmented notebooks into a single narrative is interpreted as an ongoing process rather than a complete resolution. Ultimately, the paper contends that the novel redefines subjectivity as fluid and evolving, shaped by memory, trauma, and social forces, thereby challenging the notion of a stable and coherent self.*

**Keywords:** *Wounded Subjectivity; Adolescence; Memory; Psychic Fragmentation; Identity Crisis; Trauma; Feminist Theory; Psychoanalysis; Narrative Structure; Modernist Fiction*

The exploration of subjectivity in modern literature frequently reveals a fractured and unstable sense of self, particularly in narratives that engage with trauma, memory, and gendered experience. In *The Golden Notebook*, Doris Lessing constructs a deeply complex psychological landscape in which the protagonist, Anna Wulf, embodies a condition that can be understood as wounded subjectivity. This condition emerges from the interplay of adolescence, memory, and psychic fragmentation, reflecting the difficulty of achieving a unified identity in a world shaped by ideological disillusionment, emotional instability, and socio-cultural pressures. The novel's experimental narrative form and its engagement with psychological depth position it as a seminal text in examining the fractured nature of modern identity.

The notion of wounded subjectivity in the novel is rooted in the understanding that identity is not a stable or unified construct but rather a fragmented and evolving process. Anna's reliance on multiple notebooks each representing different aspects of her life serves as a symbolic representation of her divided self. The black notebook documents her experiences in Africa, the red notebook reflects her political engagements, the yellow notebook contains fictionalized versions of her personal life, and the blue notebook functions as a diary. These divisions illustrate her attempt to impose order on a psyche that resists coherence. However, the very need for such compartmentalization underscores the extent of her fragmentation, revealing a subject who is unable to integrate her experiences into a cohesive whole.

Adolescence plays a significant role in shaping this wounded subjectivity, functioning as a formative stage marked by emotional vulnerability and identity formation. Although the narrative is situated in Anna's adult life, her recollections frequently return to earlier experiences that have left enduring psychological imprints. Adolescence, in this context, becomes a site of unresolved tensions, where ideals, desires, and societal expectations collide. These formative experiences contribute to the fragmentation of the self, as the transition to adulthood is marked by disillusionment and internal conflict. The persistence of adolescent anxieties into adulthood suggests that identity is continuously shaped by past experiences that resist closure.

Memory operates as a central mechanism through which the novel explores psychic fragmentation. Rather than presenting a linear and coherent narrative, the text unfolds through

a series of fragmented recollections that blur the boundaries between past and present. Anna's memories are often disjointed, contradictory, and emotionally charged, reflecting the instability of subjective experience. The act of remembering becomes both a means of self-exploration and a source of psychological distress, as it brings unresolved conflicts to the surface. Memory, therefore, does not provide clarity or resolution but instead reinforces the fragmented nature of the self.

The structure of memory in the novel aligns closely with the characteristics of traumatic recollection, where experiences are not integrated into a continuous narrative but instead appear in fragmented and intrusive forms. Anna's inability to construct a unified narrative of her life can be seen as a response to the overwhelming nature of her experiences, which resist assimilation into a coherent framework. This fragmentation of memory reflects the broader condition of wounded subjectivity, where the self is shaped by discontinuities and disruptions. The psychological fragmentation depicted in the novel can also be understood through psychoanalytic perspectives on the divided self. Anna's notebooks function as external manifestations of internal conflicts, representing the tension between conscious and unconscious processes. Her inability to reconcile these divisions suggests a fundamental instability at the core of her identity. The recurring sense of breakdown that permeates the narrative highlights the fragility of the self, as it is constantly threatened by both internal desires and external pressures. This instability is further intensified by the socio-political context in which Anna exists, particularly her disillusionment with ideological systems such as communism.

The intersection of personal and political dimensions is crucial in understanding the fragmentation of subjectivity in the novel. Anna's political engagements reflect her search for meaning and coherence in a world marked by uncertainty. However, her eventual disillusionment with these ideologies mirrors her personal sense of fragmentation, suggesting that external structures are incapable of providing a stable foundation for identity. The collapse of political ideals parallels the breakdown of personal relationships, reinforcing the interconnectedness of individual and collective experiences.

Gender plays a pivotal role in shaping wounded subjectivity, as Anna's experiences are deeply influenced by the expectations and constraints imposed on women. Her struggles with

autonomy, creativity, and emotional fulfillment are situated within a patriarchal framework that limits her ability to construct a coherent identity. The conflicting demands of personal relationships, motherhood, and professional aspirations create tensions that contribute to her fragmentation. The novel thus highlights the ways in which subjectivity is not only a psychological construct but also a social and cultural phenomenon shaped by power relations and gendered expectations.

The experimental narrative structure of the novel further reinforces the theme of fragmentation. The use of multiple notebooks, shifting perspectives, and non-linear chronology challenges conventional narrative forms and reflects the instability of subjective experience. This formal complexity requires the reader to engage with the text in a manner that mirrors the protagonist's struggle for coherence. The eventual attempt to integrate the fragmented notebooks into a single "golden notebook" suggests a movement towards unity, yet this integration remains incomplete and tentative, emphasizing that wholeness is an ongoing process rather than a final state.

The concept of wounded subjectivity can be further deepened through the lens of trauma theory, which highlights the enduring impact of unresolved psychological wounds on identity formation. Trauma disrupts the continuity of experience, creating gaps and silences that resist articulation. In Anna's narrative, these disruptions are evident in the fragmented structure of her writing, which reflects the difficulty of confronting and expressing traumatic experiences. Her repeated attempts to document her life reveal both a desire for understanding and an inability to fully integrate her experiences.

This fragmentation is closely linked to temporal dislocation, where the boundaries between past and present become blurred. Anna's memories intrude upon her present consciousness, shaping her perceptions and actions in ways that destabilize her sense of self. This collapse of temporal boundaries underscores the fluidity of identity, as the self is continuously redefined through the interplay of memory and experience. The past is not a fixed entity but an active force that influences the present, reinforcing the instability of subjectivity. From a postmodern perspective, the novel challenges the notion of a unified and coherent self by foregrounding multiplicity and contradiction. Anna's different notebooks can be seen as representing multiple identities that coexist in tension rather than harmony. This multiplicity

reflects the fragmented nature of modern subjectivity, where identity is not a singular entity but a dynamic and evolving construct. The inability to reconcile these multiple selves highlights the complexity of human experience in a world characterized by uncertainty and change.

Language itself becomes a site of struggle in the novel, as Anna grapples with the limitations of expression. The inadequacy of language to fully capture subjective experience contributes to her sense of fragmentation, as she is unable to articulate the depth of her emotions and thoughts. This linguistic limitation underscores the gap between experience and representation, suggesting that subjectivity cannot be fully contained within language.

The role of the body further complicates the construction of subjectivity, as Anna's psychological distress manifests in physical forms. Her experiences of illness and exhaustion reflect the embodiment of emotional conflict, highlighting the interconnectedness of mind and body. The wounded self is thus experienced not only psychologically but also physically, emphasizing the holistic nature of subjectivity.

Interpersonal relationships in the novel mirror the protagonist's internal fragmentation, as her interactions with others are marked by instability and conflict. These relationships reveal the difficulty of achieving emotional connection in a fragmented world, while also providing moments of insight and self-reflection. The tension between intimacy and alienation underscores the complexity of human relationships and their role in shaping identity.

Silence and absence also play a significant role in the narrative, as what remains unspoken often carries profound meaning. These gaps in the narrative reflect the limits of representation and the difficulty of articulating certain experiences, particularly those related to trauma. The incomplete nature of the narrative reinforces the idea that identity is an ongoing process rather than a fixed entity.

The integration of the notebooks into the golden notebook can be interpreted as an attempt to move towards a more unified sense of self. However, this integration does not resolve the tensions within Anna's identity but rather acknowledges them as part of her experience. The wounded subject is thus not healed in a conventional sense but becomes more self-aware, recognizing the complexity and multiplicity of identity.

From a feminist perspective, the novel offers a critique of the social structures that contribute to women's psychological fragmentation. The conflicting expectations placed on women create tensions that are difficult to reconcile, leading to a fractured sense of self. Anna's experiences reflect the broader struggles of women navigating these pressures, highlighting the ways in which subjectivity is shaped by gendered realities.

The notion of creative breakdown further enriches the understanding of wounded subjectivity, as Anna's psychological crisis becomes a catalyst for self-exploration and transformation. The breakdown disrupts her existing patterns of thought, creating the possibility for new forms of understanding. Writing becomes a means of navigating this crisis, allowing her to engage with her fragmented self and to reconstruct her identity in new ways.

The broader implications of the novel extend beyond the individual experience, offering insights into the nature of subjectivity in the modern world. The fragmentation depicted in the text reflects the complexities of contemporary life, where traditional notions of identity are challenged by rapid social and cultural change. The novel suggests that fragmentation is not merely a condition to be overcome but a fundamental aspect of human experience.

In examining the interplay of adolescence, memory, and psychic fragmentation, the novel presents a nuanced portrayal of subjectivity as both vulnerable and dynamic. The wounded self is not simply a site of brokenness but also one of potential transformation, capable of reflection and growth. The persistence of adolescent experiences in shaping adult identity underscores the continuity of the self, even in its fragmented form.

Ultimately, *The Golden Notebook* offers a profound exploration of the fractured nature of subjectivity, challenging conventional notions of coherence and stability. Through its innovative narrative form and psychological depth, the novel captures the complexities of identity in a world marked by uncertainty and change. The concept of wounded subjectivity, as articulated through the themes of adolescence, memory, and psychic fragmentation, provides a powerful framework for understanding the challenges of constructing a coherent self in the modern age.

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# Transition in Postcolonial Context: A Study of Cultural and Social Transformation in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*

S. Christu Regis

*Assistant Professor, Department of English, Stella Mary's College of Engineering, Kanyakumari District, Tamil Nadu, India.*

*Corresponding Author Email: [s.christuregis@gmail.com](mailto:s.christuregis@gmail.com)*

## **Abstract**

*This article explores the concept of transition within the framework of postcolonial theory, with particular reference to Indian society and literature. Transition is examined as a continuous process shaped by colonial and postcolonial influences that redefine identity, culture, and language. The study highlights how colonial intervention disrupted indigenous traditions and fostered hybrid identities among the colonized. Focusing on Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*, the paper analyses the transformation of social, cultural, and ecological landscapes in Ayemenem. The novel reflects the impact of globalization, commercialization, and environmental degradation on traditional life. Furthermore, the research discusses how historical spaces and cultural practices are commodified in the postcolonial era. By integrating theoretical perspectives and literary analysis, the article argues that transition is not merely a shift in condition but a complex negotiation between past and present, tradition and modernity, ultimately shaping contemporary postcolonial identity.*

**Keywords:** *Transition, colonial theory, Indian society*

## **Introduction**

Transition is an inevitable and continuous process that shapes societies, cultures, and identities over time. The term "transition" refers to the movement from one state, condition, or phase to another, often involving significant changes in structure, perception, and experience. In the context of postcolonial studies, transition becomes a crucial concept because it reflects the profound transformations experienced by formerly colonized nations. These changes are not limited to political independence but extend to cultural, linguistic, and social domains.

Postcolonialism examines the consequences of colonial rule and the ways in which colonized societies respond to, resist, and reinterpret colonial influence. It addresses issues such as identity, hybridity, marginalization, and cultural displacement. The process of transition in postcolonial societies is complex, as it involves negotiating between indigenous traditions and imposed colonial values. This article explores the idea of transition in Indian society, particularly through the lens of literature, with special reference to Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*.

### **Transition and Postcolonial Theory**

Postcolonial theory provides a framework to understand how colonialism has shaped the identities and cultures of colonized nations. The concept of transition is deeply embedded in this theory, as it highlights the shift from colonial domination to postcolonial independence. However, this shift is not smooth or complete; rather, it is marked by contradictions, conflicts, and continuities.

Homi K. Bhabha, a prominent postcolonial theorist, emphasizes the idea of hybridity and the formation of new identities in the “in-between” spaces created by colonial encounters. According to him, nations and identities are not fixed but are constantly being reconstructed through narratives and historical experiences. This perspective helps us understand transition as an ongoing process rather than a completed event.

In India, colonialism brought about significant transformations in language, education, governance, and culture. English became a dominant language, influencing not only communication but also thought processes and literary expression. As a result, many Indians developed a dual identity, balancing their native traditions with Western influences. This cultural transition continues to shape Indian society even after independence.

### **Colonial Impact and Cultural Transition in India**

The colonial period in India initiated a series of transitions that affected every aspect of life. The British introduced new systems of administration, education, and economy, which altered traditional structures. Indigenous practices were often devalued, and Western ideals were promoted as superior. This led to a gradual erosion of cultural authenticity and the emergence of new hybrid forms.

One of the most significant aspects of this transition is the shift in cultural identity. Many Indians adopted Western lifestyles, values, and attitudes, becoming what can be described as “anglophiles.” This transformation created a sense of alienation from their own cultural roots. At the same time, it also gave rise to new forms of expression that blended local and foreign elements.

Religion and language also underwent considerable changes during this period. Missionary activities and English education contributed to the spread of new religious and cultural ideas. The traditional social order was challenged, leading to both reform and resistance. Thus, transition in the postcolonial context is not merely about change but also about negotiation and adaptation.

### **Transition in *The God of Small Things***

Arundhati Roy’s *The God of Small Things* is a powerful representation of transition in postcolonial India. The novel is set in the small town of Ayemenem in Kerala and explores the lives of its characters against the backdrop of social, cultural, and environmental changes. Roy vividly portrays how globalization, modernization, and historical forces reshape the landscape and the people.

The novel begins with a description of Ayemenem, once a serene and picturesque village that gradually undergoes urbanization. The ecological transformation of the region serves as a metaphor for the broader changes in society. The river Meenachal, which once symbolized life and continuity, becomes polluted and diminished, reflecting the destructive impact of modernization.

Roy also highlights the influence of globalization and economic policies on local life. The commodification of cultural spaces, such as the transformation of the “History House” into a tourist attraction, illustrates how history and tradition are repackaged for commercial purposes. This process not only distorts the past but also undermines the authenticity of cultural heritage.

### **Environmental and Cultural Degradation**

One of the most striking aspects of transition in the novel is environmental degradation. The natural beauty of Ayemenem is replaced by pollution, waste, and ecological imbalance.

The river, once a source of sustenance and identity, becomes a carrier of garbage and toxins. This transformation symbolizes the loss of harmony between humans and nature.

The degradation of the environment is closely linked to cultural decline. As traditional ways of life are replaced by modern practices, the connection between people and their surroundings weakens. The commercialization of culture further contributes to this decline. Traditional art forms, such as Kathakali, are reduced to brief performances for tourists, losing their depth and significance.

This portrayal of environmental and cultural degradation reflects the negative consequences of unchecked development. It raises important questions about sustainability and the preservation of heritage in a rapidly changing world.

### **Hybridity and Identity Crisis**

Transition in postcolonial societies often leads to hybridity, where individuals and communities embody a mixture of different cultural influences. While hybridity can be seen as a creative and dynamic process, it also creates a sense of confusion and conflict.

In *The God of Small Things*, the characters experience an identity crisis as they navigate between traditional values and modern expectations. The influence of Western culture is evident in their language, behaviour, and aspirations. However, this influence does not fully replace their native identity, resulting in a fragmented sense of self.

This condition reflects the broader reality of postcolonial societies, where individuals struggle to reconcile their past with their present. The process of transition thus becomes a site of tension and negotiation, shaping the way people perceive themselves and their place in the world.

### **Commodification of History and Culture**

Another important aspect of transition is the commodification of history and culture. In the novel, historical spaces are transformed into commercial entities, catering to the demands of tourism. The “History House,” once a symbol of colonial presence, is converted into a heritage hotel, where history is selectively presented and simplified.

This process involves the distortion and appropriation of cultural narratives. Traditional objects and practices are displayed as artifacts, detached from their original context. The past is repackaged to create an appealing image for outsiders, often at the cost of authenticity.

The commodification of culture reflects the influence of globalization and market-driven policies. It highlights the tension between preserving cultural heritage and adapting to economic realities. This aspect of transition raises critical questions about the ownership and representation of history.

### **Social Transition and Changing Values**

Transition in postcolonial societies also affects social structures and relationships. Traditional norms and hierarchies are challenged, leading to new forms of interaction and conflict. In the novel, issues such as caste, gender, and class are explored in the context of changing social dynamics.

The rigid caste system, which once governed social relations, is shown to be both persistent and evolving. While modernity introduces new opportunities and perspectives, it does not completely eliminate traditional inequalities. Instead, these inequalities take on new forms, reflecting the complexity of social transition.

Gender roles also undergo significant changes. Women in the novel struggle to assert their independence in a society that continues to impose restrictions. Their experiences highlight the intersection of tradition and modernity, as well as the challenges of navigating a transitional space.

### **Conclusion**

Transition in the postcolonial context is a multifaceted and ongoing process that shapes the identity and development of societies. It involves the interaction of historical, cultural, and economic forces, resulting in both positive and negative outcomes. While transition brings opportunities for growth and innovation, it also poses challenges related to identity, authenticity, and sustainability.

Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* provides a compelling portrayal of these complexities, illustrating how transition affects individuals and communities at multiple levels. The novel highlights the impact of globalization, environmental degradation, and cultural commodification, offering a critical perspective on contemporary society.

Ultimately, transition is not merely a movement from one state to another but a continuous negotiation between past and present. It requires a careful balance between preserving heritage and embracing change. By understanding the dynamics of transition, we can better appreciate the challenges and possibilities of the postcolonial world.

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# Clash and Convergence: Exploring the Collision of Civilizations in Joseph Boyden's *The Orenda*

S. Noble Sam

*Assistant Professor, Department of English, Stella Mary's College of Engineering, Aruthenganvilai, Azhikal Post, Kanyakumari District, Tamil Nadu, India.*

*Corresponding Author Email: [s.noblesam@gmail.com](mailto:s.noblesam@gmail.com)*

## **Abstract**

*Joseph Boyden, a Canadian academician and author, published *The Orenda* in 2013. The story is set at the beginning of the seventeenth century in an area of North America that would later become Canada. It centres on a trio of people who originate from diverse ethnic groups: Christophe, a Catholic priest from France; Snow Falls, a small girl from the Iroquois tribe; and Bird, the village head of the Wendat tribe. The present study explores the interactions of the natives with the French people who are in the native Canadian village in the form of traders, priests, and settlers. Their interdependence among the villagers has collapsed, which generates enmity among the natives. The central character of the novel, Bird, lost his big village in a village raid by his enemies, and it lost the lives of its villagers. He escapes from his village to a remote place with his family and a few others to begin a new life free from his previous mistakes. The study revolves around the relationship of the protagonist of the novel Bird with the French people and their footprints.*

**Keywords:** *colonialism, cultural assimilation, native studies, intergenerational trauma, distortion in natural ways of life*

## **Introduction**

Joseph Boyden's novel *The Orenda*, published in 2013, is the third novel in his series about his fictional ancestry, the Bird family. Boyden has the intention to expand his fiction on the lineage of the Bird family, but till now his intention has been satisfied as a trilogy. The other novels written by the Bird family are *Three Day Road* (2005) and *Through Black Spruce* (2008). Joseph Boyden is a Canadian writer who was born and brought up in Willowdale, Ontario, and he is residing in the same place at present. Born on October 31, 1966, Boyden is a Metis of Irish and Scottish ancestry. Boyden claims that he is indigenous to Canada and is

affiliated with the Canadian government. His affiliation is in conflict with that of some activists in Canada who are of native-Canadian ancestry or of Canadian ethnic ancestry. People who are inspired by his writings accept his contribution as a writer and his involvement in the rights of the First Nations people. The First Nations people are a group of indigenous people whose tribal lineage and identities are recognised by the Canadian government.

### **Discussions and Findings**

The *Orenda* is the story about the collision of civilizations in the western and northern cardinal directions. The novel is set in the late sixteenth century, which is the time when the French people visited Canada, especially the Wendat people, which is the prominent group of people referred to in *The Orenda*. This is the time when the French settlements are making efforts to colonise and culturalize Canada. The output of their efforts and the rivalry between the Huron, or Wendat, and Iroquois, or Haudenosaunee people are the subjects of the novel *The Orenda*. The Wendat and Iroquois are Canadian tribes residing nearby but are radical enemies who enjoy the bloodshed of their enemies through violence. The events of violence between the Wendat and Iroquois are narrated from the viewpoint of the Wendat, who are backed by the French missionaries. The present study, *Coalescence and its Footprints: An Evaluation of Joseph Boyden's The Orenda* presents the collision of the French culture with the native culture and its outputs.

The French came to Canada as missionaries and traders at the end of the sixteenth century. Their primary aim in Canada is to establish trade posts in the sea bays and to settle among the natives powerfully. During this time, the English and Dutch people had the primary aim of the French. Hence, they become accustomed to the native tribes by circling their trade through them. When the traders were familiar with the settlers, there was enmity among the traders who supported another colonist. Skin trade, dried fish, and other products are the primary sources of trade, which are economically valuable and profitable businesses. After the entry of the colonists, there was a distortion in the lifecycle of the natives as they slowly departed from hunting and gathering. Once they hunted and gathered for their own needs, but now they hunt and gather their game for commercial needs. This act decreased the local population of animals and fish. Hence, the natives went into deep fishing and dense forests. More than their role as hunters, the natives collect the same from other tribal groups and barter goods brought by the colonists. This increases the financial income of the natives, and the demand for the exportation of goods increases in Canada. The eagerness to bring more loads

to their trade increases enmity among the natives, and the enmity is backed by the colonists by supplying weapons. The reason for backing the natives by the colonists is to increase the trade with the natives, or their trade could be borrowed by other colonists.

The people of the Huron are the central figures of the novel *The Orenda*. They engage in trade with the French people and barter the goods brought from the French to their allies. The allies of the Huron people refer to tribal people who are closer to the Huron, especially the Iron People. *The Orenda* refers to the trade with the Iron People as "The harvest that year was bountiful, not one warrior perished to the Haudenosaunee or in fast waters on the long summer trek to trade with the Iron People so far away by the great rapids" (26). Bruce Trigger describes the lives of the Huron people in the sixteenth century in his book *Children of Aataentsic: A History of the Hurons People to 1660*. While referring to the trade business of the Huron's, Trigger states that,

Hurons country had many natural advantages. Light soil, that the Iroquoians were able to cultivate, occurred there more abundantly than anywhere else in the eastern half of southern Ontario. . . . The region was also surrounded on three sides by lakes and rivers abounding in fish at every season of the year. This proximity of fish and good soil supplied the key elements in the Iroquoian subsistence economy and no doubt explains why Hurons had lived there in considerable numbers from an early period. . . . [The Iroquois and the other tribes were attracted to the land of the Hurons because of its fertility and its] great potential for trade and commerce. (165)

The colonists worry about the natives being familiar to the other colonists. The colonists feel it is trouble for their flourishing trade when their traders barter with other colonists. Hence, they show their interest in their allies by maintaining the enmity by supplying weapons. The Wendat and Iroquois have been enemies for years, but the intensity of their enmity is also shared by the French and English. In *The Orenda*, Champlain is a French missionary and the chief of all the missionaries in Canada. He is worried about the distribution of weapons by the Dutch and English to the natives. The Wendat also worries about the circulation of weapons among the Iroquois. By this circulation, the Iroquois can easily defeat the Wendat, and hence the Wendat worries about the Iroquois combat. Until the ingress of the colonists' weapons into the hands of the natives, they fought against their enemies using native weapons. After the supply of guns by the colonists, the native weapons had to be egressed for survival.

In *The Orenda*, Champlain upholds the rhythm of rivalry between the Huron and Iroquois. While learning about the increase in the supply of guns by the English to the Iroquois, Champlain says that "The British are fools for being so easy with their gifts of destruction. Mark my words. Their allies, the Iroquois, when they are in the position of power to do so, will turn against their friends" (123). He further asks the Wendat people to treat the enemies of the French as enemies. This shows that the colonists are interested in the disintegration of the natives to imply colonial law in the native land. Champlain organises a gathering with the Wendat village head, Bird, and other prominent people of the village. During the organisation's dialogue with Bird and his people, Champlain goes as follows:

We have friends in common," Champlain continues, "and we have common troubles. The Dutch to the south care nothing for you, and the English would be happy to see you wiped from this world." ... "The English and the Dutch give our common enemy their weapons, and their weapons put a great fear into our bodies ...". "You are our brothers, and so we ask you to gift us those." He points to a musket being held by a soldier behind Champlain. "The only way to battle our common enemy and win is to be allowed to fight that enemy on common ground". (*Orenda* 120,121)

Bird is able to recognise the intentions of the French and their Catholic missionaries. His villagers are not aware of the footprints of the colonists' decisions. Though Bird is aware of the same, he is in a situation where he cannot overturn the decision made by the colonists or organise power centres against the colonists. Champlain fears the collision of trade alliances with his allies. As he says, "The Dutch to the south care nothing for you, and the English would be happy to see you wiped from this world" (*Orenda* 121). The colonists are more powerful than the natives because they have weapons of mass destruction. The colonists behave friendly with the natives to learn about their lives and to study their strengths on social and communal levels. This study helps the colonists understand that the natives are weak in social and communal stages, and the colonists can effortlessly distort the combats of the natives at any cost. More than the effortless war, the natives have indigenous weapons, mostly bows and arrows. But the colonists freely used guns, which have the ability to pierce three people with a single shot.

The natives are not aware of using muskets, and they were totally untaught about using muskets. But the colonists have skilled infantrymen, and the colonists are good at propelling volleys of musket fire at any confrontation. The natives need to be trained to propel gunfire by the colonists. Champlain is not concerned with protecting the Wendat people by supplying guns. Instead, he needs to hand guns to the Wendats to protect his alliance with them, or else the Wendats would join the British or Dutch colonists to protect themselves from the Iroquois. Hence, Champlain hands a musket to the village head, Bird. The events related to handling the musket for Bird, as referred to in the novel *The Orenda*, are as follows: "Champlain walks to Bird. 'You are a great warrior,' he says, handing the musket over. 'I can see that you have suffered in battle.' He points to Bird's missing finger. 'And great warriors need great weapons. So, I give you this as a sign of my friendship and as your brother. Tomorrow I will have my greatest warrior show you how to use it" (*Orenda* 121). Barbara Graymont, in her writing *The Iroquois (Indians of North America)*, speaks about the order by Governor Peter Stuyvesant permitting guns to their allies to survive any confrontations. Barbara refers to the governor's approval as "Governor Peter Stuyvesant... approved the sale of four hundred guns directly to these Mohawk friends. Any Mohawk attack on the French or their Indian allies would benefit the Dutch, who were rivals of the French in the fur trade" (Graymont 45).

Handing weapons to the natives does not support them in confronting their combat; instead, it increases the intensity of enmity between adversaries. Hence, when the Wendat are skilled at firing with muskets, their enemies, the Iroquois, will try to advance their armaments to confront the Wendat. Therefore, this situation creates a crisis among the natives and will create a fear of inconvenience among their allies. More than the competition for dominance in trade, it was a struggle between the colonists and the natives to hold on to important positions. The natives tried ingenious methods to increase their wealth by capturing trading canoes and conducting village raids. They needed to strengthen their military since other tribal groups had started to buy guns in large quantities to make theirs stronger. The Iroquois and other tribes followed the seasons for trade and canoe routes to raid their canoes to gather items to be delivered to the colonies so that the captured products could be sold to their adventurers. This prevented them from having to invade an entire community. This tactic gained popularity and was successful for the majority of the most powerful tribal communities. As a result, the tribes concentrated on acquiring rifles and other deadly weapons, which helped them increase their fighting capacity.

## Summation

Increase in warfare among the Wendat and the Iroquois helps them to punish their enemies graphically when caught alone or as crew. In some occasions, the whole villagers are killed by a raid. The people who escaped from the raid are forced to live in remote areas to escape from the survey of their enemies. The Orenda can be further delivered on esotericism, ecocriticism, and humanism.

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# From Forest to Classroom: Community – Centered Language Teaching and Socio-Economic Empowerment in the Kota Tribe

G. Gandhi Mathi<sup>1\*</sup> and R. Abilasha<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar, Department of English, Holy Cross College (Autonomous), Nagercoil, Tamil Nadu, India.

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor of English, Holy Cross College (Autonomous), Nagercoil, Tamil Nadu, India.

\*Corresponding Author Email: [gandhimathi2312@gmail.com](mailto:gandhimathi2312@gmail.com)

## Abstract

*The Kota tribe of the Nilgiri Hills occupies a unique linguistic and cultural position within the Dravidian family, serving as a distinct isolate. As this community transitions from a forest-based ritual economy to a modern integrated system, education emerges as a double-edged sword: while it provides a path to empowerment, it simultaneously threatens cultural erasure. This paper investigates Community-Centered Language Teaching (CCLT) as a restorative pedagogical framework designed to mitigate this risk. By shifting the focus from standardized English Language Teaching (ELT) to a model that incorporates Kota metallurgy, music, and oral history, the research demonstrates how indigenous students can achieve significant cognitive gains and enhanced socio-economic mobility. The study addresses the practical challenges of instructing an unwritten language. Ultimately, the paper argues for the implementation of a "hybrid classroom." This model functions as both a sanctuary for the Kota tongue and a gateway to global English proficiency, ensuring that linguistic preservation and modern academic success are not mutually exclusive goals but rather complementary forces in indigenous education.*

**Keywords:** Education, Kota, Community-Centered Language Teaching,

## Introduction

The Nilgiri plateau in Southern India is home to several unique tribal groups, with the Kota being notably industrially specialized. Historically, they supplied iron tools and music to the Toda and Kurumba tribes. However, the 21st century has brought a "Linguistic Winter" to the Nilgiris, with the "Medium of Instruction" (MoI) being a key issue. Kota children are taught

in Tamil or English in most government schools, languages that offer economic benefits but treat their home language as a hurdle rather than an asset. This paper suggests a shift: bringing "Forest" (traditional knowledge) into the "Classroom" (modern education) through CCLT.

### **Ethnographic Profile of the Kota Tribe**

To understand the necessity of community-centered teaching, it is pivotal to understand the community's unique socio-cultural architecture. The Kota resides in seven villages known as *Kökals*. These settlements are the repositories of specialized knowledge. The Kota language is a Southern Dravidian language with a phonology that is different from its neighbour, Tamil. It features complex consonant clusters (e.g., the word for "eye" is *kan*, but the pluralization and verb conjugation involve shifts that are difficult for non-native speakers to grasp). Since the language has no written script, it is very vulnerable to lexical borrowing where native words are gradually replaced by Tamil or English ones ultimately putting the language at risk of extinction. The traditional "Jajmani" system a ritual-based barter arrangement among tribes has declined. Today, the Kota work as small-scale tea growers, laborers, or government employees. This transition requires a strong level of functional literacy in English to manage the demands of modern administrative systems in India.

### **Literature Review**

Richard K. Wolf's *The Blacking of Blue* offers an essential ethnographic analysis of how Kota music and ritual anchor identity, memory, and history. While this work provides culturally resonant content for Community-Centered Language Teaching (CCLT) positioning music as a powerful mnemonic for language acquisition a significant gap remains. Writing as an ethnomusicologist, Wolf overlooks pedagogical application, failing to guide primary school teachers on how to practically adapt Kota rituals to teach English structures like tenses or prepositions. Consequently, the study provides the cultural "text" but lacks the methodological "bridge" to transform social performances into actionable classroom strategies.

Kamil V. Zvelebil's *Dravidian Linguistics: An Introduction* provides a foundational structural blueprint for the Kota language, offering a phonetic analysis essential for developing a "Transliterated Script." Since the Kota lack a formal alphabet, Zvelebil's work allows for the use of the Latin alphabet to represent Kota sounds, enabling students to master English phonics and Kota preservation simultaneously. However, a significant gap remains: the text is overly academic. To be effective for rural educators, Zvelebil's complex linguistic data requires "pedagogical translation" to bridge the divide between high-level Dravidian linguistics and practical, primary-level classroom instruction.

Gupta and Nair's 2023 study, *The Digital Divide and Indigenous Education*, investigates how internet accessibility impacts the educational trajectories of tribal students in Tamil Nadu. A key finding is that while Kota youth are increasingly proficient with smartphones, their digital activity is defined by the consumption of mainstream, non-indigenous media rather than materials that reflect their own language or heritage. This highlights a critical reality: digital access does not inherently result in cultural empowerment. While Gupta and Nair present technology as a remedy for educational marginalization, a significant gap remains. Without intentional community context and indigenous knowledge frameworks, the introduction of technology risks accelerating cultural erosion rather than fostering identity preservation or meaningful learning.

### **Community-Centered Language Teaching (CCLT) in Practice**

Community-Centered Language Teaching (CCLT) is a restorative approach to education that treats a student's indigenous heritage as a valuable academic asset. Instead of following a subtractive model where the native language is replaced by a dominant one, CCLT draws on the "Funds of Knowledge" theory, which recognizes that every child brings a rich set of cultural skills and lived experiences to the classroom. By incorporating these into teaching, educators can lower students' anxiety and make subjects like English and Science more meaningful and relatable.

In the context of the Kota tribe of the Nilgiri Hills, this approach suggests using CCLT to preserve cultural identity while learning English. It proposes two key strategies: linguistic transliteration and domain-specific integration. Since Kota has no written script, the Latin alphabet can act as a phonetic bridge, enabling the creation of bilingual materials that combine oral traditions with English translations to support learning. Additionally, traditional practices are used as teaching tools—for example, iron-forging processes can illustrate action verbs like "heat," "hammer," and "cool," while knowledge of forest landscapes can help teach geography and spatial concepts. Initiatives such as an "Elder-in-Residence" program further strengthen this model, turning the classroom into a space that both protects the Kota language and supports access to global English proficiency without losing cultural identity.

### **ELT and Socio-Economic Empowerment**

The introduction of English Language Teaching (ELT) in the Kota community is now seen not as a force of cultural assimilation, but as a strategic "language of protection" that

supports socio-economic empowerment. For the Kota people, proficiency in English acts as a safeguard, enabling them to understand and challenge complex legal documents related to their ancestral land without depending on outsiders. In the Nilgiris, recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage site, English also promotes economic independence by helping the community manage eco-tourism initiatives, ensuring that the benefits of global attention remain within the tribe rather than going to external corporations.

From an educational standpoint, a Community-Centered Language Teaching (CCLT) approach offers key advantages such as improved psychological comfort and stronger learning connections. By affirming students' "forest identity" within the classroom, schools can help reduce high dropout rates common in indigenous communities. Research also suggests that children who first develop literacy in their mother tongue tend to achieve greater proficiency in additional languages like English. However, these benefits are accompanied by notable challenges. The absence of a standardized Kota dialect across the seven villages makes it difficult to design a uniform curriculum, while rigid state-level assessments conducted in Tamil or English create further obstacles. Teachers often worry that focusing on Kota-based teaching methods may negatively impact students' performance in standardized exams.

Although the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 marks a positive step by promoting mother-tongue instruction up to Grade 5, there remains a significant gap in implementation for the Kota community. While the Tribal Research Centre (TRC) in Ooty has documented the language, there is a clear disconnect between such academic efforts and actual classroom practice in village schools. This issue is compounded by a lack of proper teacher training. Many educators posted in these areas come from outside regions and may view the assignment unfavourably. Without adequate incentives or training in the local language and culture, they often struggle to effectively translate policy into meaningful, culturally responsive teaching.

## Conclusion

The Kota tribe does not require "saving" from their ancestral forests, nor do they need to be "shielded" from the complexities of the modern world. Such paternalistic views ignore the inherent agency and intellectual depth of indigenous communities. Instead, what is required is a structural and pedagogical bridge, a role that Community-Centred Language Teaching

(CCLT) is uniquely designed to fulfil. By transforming the classroom into a synergistic space where the blacksmith's forge and the English textbook coexist, we empower a new generation of Kota youth to become truly "Bicultural and Bilingual." This framework ensures that students do not have to choose between their heritage and their future; rather, they can use one to strengthen the other. Education, in its most restorative form, should never be a process of "unlearning" the forest or stripping away the linguistic nuances of one's identity to fit a standardized mould. Instead, it should be a process of cognitive expansion—learning how to translate and explain the forest to the global community. When a Kota student uses English to describe the metallurgical precision of their elders or the oral cartography of the Nilgiri Hills, they are not just practicing grammar; they are engaging in an act of cultural diplomacy. This "hybrid sanctuary" model of schooling recognizes that indigenous knowledge is not a relic of the past but a specialized "toolbox" for the future.

Ultimately, the goal of CCLT is to provide the Kota with the linguistic tools necessary for socio-economic mobility and legal protection without demanding the sacrifice of their mother tongue. By anchoring ELT in the tribe's own "Funds of Knowledge," we create a gateway to global proficiency that is rooted in local pride. The forest and the classroom are not opposites; they are two halves of a complete, modern indigenous education.

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# Gender Identity, Social Crisis, and Structural Exclusion: A Critical Analysis of Vidya's Living Smile

Anu R

*Assistant Professor of English, Department of Science and Humanities, Loyola Institute of Technology and Science, Thovalai, Kanyakumari, Tamil Nadu, India.*

*Corresponding Author Email: [anu.english@lites.edu.in](mailto:anu.english@lites.edu.in)*

## **Abstract**

*Gender operates as a socially constructed framework that regulates identity and determines access to social legitimacy. This paper analyses the crisis of gender identity and structural exclusion through the autobiographical narrative of Vidya. The study examines how societal norms, familial expectations, and institutional barriers restrict self-realisation among transgender individuals. It further explores the intersections of education, employment, and cultural representation in shaping transgender experiences. Although legal measures such as the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019 aim to ensure equality, persistent stigma and discrimination limit their effectiveness. The paper argues that meaningful inclusion requires structural transformation beyond legal recognition.*

**Keywords:** *Gender identity; Transgender experience; Social exclusion; Structural discrimination; Self-realisation*

## **I. Introduction**

Gender categories function as normative systems that define acceptable identities within society while excluding those who deviate from binary frameworks. For transgender individuals, this results in a crisis of selfhood, where personal identity conflicts with socially imposed roles. The autobiography *Living Smile*, Vidya provides a significant narrative that captures this tension between inner identity and external expectation. Her journey reflects the broader realities faced by transgender individuals in India, where the pursuit of self-realization is often hindered by social stigma, discrimination, and lack of institutional support. This paper seeks to examine how gender operates as a restrictive structure and how transgender individuals negotiate identity, dignity, and survival within such constraints.

## II. Discussion

*Living Smile* is an autobiography written by Vidya, a transgender person. She said, “I was in search of myself, going beyond my confusion over my gender”. According to Vidya, along her path to self-actualization, this transgender lady has personal suffrage. Being friends with three females at school helped her feel more at ease. Back when she was a student, no one questioned her gender; after all, she was still a male. They likely assumed she was just trying to keep herself from being distracted by meaningless small talk. However, they were of a more mature age, and they began to make remarks about her friendships with other women. Because she is fundamentally a woman, she felt humiliated and uneasy when teased with another woman. Since acknowledging one's gender may not make someone feel awful, there is a huge difference between ridiculing and recognizing. While they despise being mocked. Since she was a little girl, Vidya had a strong desire to pursue a career in acting. When she was younger, she enjoyed dancing to the music of Hollywood while dressed as her sister and wearing her dresses. Her goal after earning an MA was to get a Ph.D. in theatre, but she was unable to follow her vocation because her urges to be more feminine intensified and because she was constantly told to keep her inner life hidden. In order to fully express herself as a woman, she had to do more than just overcome the inherent masculinity she had been born with. A lack of societal acceptance, discrimination, and various forms of violence have been obstacles that almost all transgender and transsexual people have had to overcome. They are more likely to engage in risky sexual behaviour and drug use, which may lead to mental and physical health problems including depression, as they were likely separated from their family at an early age. They may be risking even more loss of the identity they sought by undergoing harmful surgeries and hormone treatments, despite the fact that their whole focus is on changing their body and embracing the gender they wish. They are unable to make any money by bestowing their blessings on newlyweds since they are prohibited from engaging in sex labour and because no weddings are performed. People should not have to give up on their dreams just so a society that can't accept diversity may continue to function. Resuming our discussion of Vidya, her father, a sweeper from the lowest caste in India, was responsible for her education. His father was very committed to his son's education from the moment of Saravanan's birth (Vidya's name while she was still claiming to be a male), assigning him homework and repeatedly giving him the same tests. A higher education and a career as a collector were his goals for his kid. So, educating the man of the house was a step towards his father's redemption. In order to send his kid to college, he took out a high-interest loan. Feeling the need to shed his

masculinity and become a "Vidya" made Saravanan want to crush his father's aspirations one by one. No one would believe him if he told them he is really a female and not Saravanan. She worried that everyone could be taken aback by the revelation. Therefore, when one's gender is revealed, the whole family is thrust into the unknown. Imagine how much simpler their lives would be if people were more tolerant and less self-centred. Sri, Vidya's transsexual friend and coworker at a private IT company, was an expert in computer science with a master's degree. He was a successful businessman who had moved to Chennai from Madurai, where he was born into a wealthy family. Like Vidya, he was the youngest son and had to deal with familial and societal issues. He put in long hours studying and paid little attention to the opinions of others. While attending an NGO that provided housing for transgender people, he fulfilled his responsibility to his family and took advantage of his independence and leisure. He lived his life to the fullest, hidden from prying eyes. Sri encouraged Vidya to get her doctorate, have a solid job, be a good son to her family, and take time each year to attend transgender festivities and festivals and volunteer with non-governmental organisations (NGOs). She risks becoming a beggar as a result of coming out and undergoing sex changes. Most transgender and transsexual people conduct a double life in this way. Some may consider ending their lives; others will choose to keep fighting. Due to their status as a third gender, they have several challenges in areas such as education and work. It is more necessary for transgender people in our culture to hide their identities, continue their education, and achieve economic independence. Here, education is crucial. Among transgender and transsexual people with college degrees, there is a strong desire to break away from traditional gender roles and live independently. They are unable to participate actively in their education since bullying follows them from elementary school to college. As a result, people of both genders need access to education so they may learn about the wonders of God's handiwork.

Transgender people from southern India tend to settle in northern cities such as Delhi, Kolkata, Pune, and Mumbai. The fact that they are revered as incarnations of Krishna by the locals is a major factor in this. However, it doesn't imply they'd be able to live a respectable life there. A person's curse might come true, or they could believe it's nice to get their benefits. Regardless of the veracity of these claims, they have incited tirunangais to seek refuge in such urban centres. Certain transgender Hindu tales and stories exist in Tamil Nadu. In order to grant Arjuna's son Aravan one more request before he had to devote himself to Kali in order to win the battle, Lord Krishna assumed the appearance of Mohini. Just one day before he was

beheaded, Krishna fulfilled Aravan's last request when he wedded him in the shape of Mohini. While the Ramayana, Mahabharata, and Vedas do not have any explicit discussions of homosexuality, they do contain several tales of sex change or a third sex character. A non-deity may be blessed or cursed to become an incarnation, or it may be a deity taking on human form. Despite this, transgender people are disproportionately targeted by criminals in every state in South India. Major crimes have occurred, but nobody has spoken about them in almost a decade. Up until that point, no one had any idea how widespread the violence was or what kinds of violence were occurring in the nation. People just never gave a damn about it and thought it was irrelevant, so that's why. South Indians, in particular, are among the most devout of all Indians. However, it seems that these myths and epics do not affect transgender people when it concerns their rights. People fail to recognise that LGBTQ+ groups are comprised of regular people who have basic needs met, like everyone else. However, they are constantly met with contempt, obnoxious gazes, disdain, coldness, and animosity, as if being in their presence may be harmful. Being one of nature's creations, they are held responsible. The fact that homosexuality is still seen as a sin by society is unfair. Many members of the LGBTQ+ community avoid living in northern states due to the widespread stigma and prejudice they face there. Less difficulty is encountered there, maybe as a result of aversion to curses or Lord Krishna's incarnations. So, men in the South who choose to live more traditionally female lives must go north. Unfortunately, things won't be any better in India's northern states too. Begging or prostitution are the fates that await them. They must all bid farewell to the hopes of having a regular work and going home to their families each night as they get ready to face the arduous road ahead. They will be begging on the street, at traffic lights, and in stores. They must adhere to all community regulations in order to avoid disobeying them and generating problems. As they made their way through the streets, they would also be required to maintain a respectful head posture. House ownership was out of the question for them. "Obviously, I had waited for this moment," Vidya says while describing one such instance of pleading. I felt obligated to do it since it was required of me. My head commanded my hand to reach out, but my hand would have none of it! I was visibly emotional. I stood there, anxious and unsure, and then, out of nowhere, my Master of Arts in Linguistics came flooding back to me. In Vidya, The futility of her Master of Arts degree became immediately apparent to her. Having a Master of Arts degree is no guarantee that you will get employment with the government. No one, not even private sector sympathisers, would hire a transgender person. Even There won't be a funding agency or corporation willing to provide them business if they wish to become a well-known

entrepreneur. As a result, for transgender people, social security is an abstract concept. Their non-membership in this society was reinforced by the insults and tired wishes that were hurled at them. They began to see society as a system of ridicule because everyone else had treated them with disdain up to this point. It turns out that the world is full with insane people, and that many of them have to endure physical suffering and shame. Corruption, greed, obscenity, treachery, and cruelty persist among the people. Therefore, it is pointless for them to constantly try to make themselves feel superior. Since we are compensating them for the barbs and stings we threw into them while pounding them into submission, pleading for a rupee or two is not unethical, even if they are unable to work. Begging isn't as simple as it seems, and there aren't any ordinary employment waiting for them when they go out. From now on, being transgender in our culture is all about risking everything. The life story of India's first transgender principal came to light with the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act of 2016, which brought many success stories to the forefront. Transgender persons' rights, welfare, and associated issues are safeguarded by the legislation, which was introduced by India's Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and passed by the country's parliament. Vidya and other transgender people have a distinct demeanour, which highlights the need of education as a fundamental human right. Among many things, her incessant restlessness has found an artistic expression in the performing arts, dance, and literature. Vidya went through a similar experience; she first avoided Manobi, an illiterate transgender person, but eventually got close to other transgender people.

People who identify as transgender have always been a part of human society, no matter where it has been settled. Some doors to work opened for transgender people when the transgender rights protection law was passed. The bill outlaws discrimination of any form in hiring practices, including but not limited to: unfair treatment in the workplace, denial of employment, and biased compensation for the same. Hiring members of the transgender community is an urgent need. It seems that roughly fifty transgender persons have been engaged in Tamil Nadu, a state in southern India. A transgender person from Tamil Nadu was the first sub-inspector of policies. Kochi Metro Rail Limited's employment department employed around 25 transgender persons in Kerala the same year. Since neither their companies nor any landlords were prepared to take them in, half of them had no choice but to leave their employment within a month. Providing a level playing field allows everyone in the community a chance to shine. For example, transgender makeup artists have taken over

Kerala's cosmetics and makeup sector, leaving onlookers in awe with their magical brushes. They made great strides ahead in comparison to previous decades, casting a spell on everyone from brides to celebrities and models. Their success in breaking out of their shell and securing a good position in a mainstream company should serve as an example to those in a similar situation. Therefore, protecting their interests by eliminating discrimination in job and educational opportunities remains a significant concern, especially with the law of 2016. Severe punishments for offenders are one approach to putting the law into action. More than simply a revolutionary concept, equality has to permeate every aspect of society, from households to universities to businesses. Strong family values are the only way for a society to transform. They need to learn at home that we are human beings with hopes, fears, and desires just like them. Equal access to hiring, facilities for using the lavatory, and safeguards for their rights, health, and life should ease their fears.

### III. Conclusion

The analysis demonstrates that the crisis faced by transgender individuals is deeply embedded within social, economic, and cultural systems. The experiences of Living Smile Vidya reveal that identity conflict, social ridicule, and economic exclusion are interconnected forms of structural marginalisation. Although legal frameworks provide a foundation for equality, their impact is limited without corresponding changes in societal attitudes and institutional practices. Achieving true inclusion requires a comprehensive transformation that ensures access to education, employment, and social acceptance. Only through such systemic change can transgender individuals realise their aspirations and live with dignity.

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Dr. R. S. Suganth serves as Assistant Professor of English at Vivekananda College, Agasteeswaram, Kanyakumari, Tamil Nadu, India where they combine rigorous scholarship with a passion for inclusive and transformative education. He is an active member of English Language Teacher's Association of India (ELTAI). His academic specialisation includes Indian Writing, Green Literature, Environmental Studies and Indigenous Studies. He has made a significant scholarly contribution through publishing papers in Scopus, Web of Science, UGC CARE-listed and in peer reviewed journals. He has authored book and edited a book volume. He was awarded with best researcher award by ESN publications in the year 2021. In addition to he has presented research papers at various National and International conferences with several works included in conference proceedings. He has also actively participated in numerous faculty development programmes, workshops, seminars, and guest lectures, picturises his commitment on professional and academic development.



Dr. A. Vimal serves as an Assistant Professor of English in the Department of Science and Humanities at Stella Mary's College of Engineering, Aruthenganvilai, Kanyakumari, Tamil Nadu, India. He is actively engaged in teaching Professional English and Soft Skills to engineering students, fostering both linguistic proficiency and communicative competence. His academic specialisations encompass Indian Writing in English, Cultural Studies, and Film Studies, reflecting a multidisciplinary orientation in his research prsuits. Dr. Vimal has made significant scholarly contributions through the publication of numerous research articles in Scopus-, Web of Science-, and ABDC-indexed journals, as well as in UGC CARE-listed and peer-reviewed journals. In addition to his publications, he has presented research papers at various national and international conferences, with several of his works included in conference proceedings. He has also actively participated in numerous workshops, faculty development programmes, seminars, and guest lectures, demonstrating his continued commitment to academic growth and professional enrichment.

