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## From Civilization to Barbarism in Contemporary Latin American Film

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### Abstract

While during the past few decades the concept of civilization –in a Western-European sense- has systematically come under fire in the Humanities (for instance in historiography and postcolonial studies), the barbaric –embodied by Shakespeare’s Caliban– has in the meantime been recycled in terms of the repressed ‘subaltern’. The aim of this paper is to have an in-depth look at how the 19th century predominant Latin American paradigm of “Civilización y barbarie” (Civilization and Barbarism) is represented in *El ciudadano ilustre* (*The Distinguished Citizen*, Argentina 2016), a fictional account of an Argentinian writer’s life after winning the Nobel Prize, yet one with a highly ambiguous ending. I argue that the film establishes a dialogic link with classics of Latin American literature such as “*El matadero*” (*the Slaughterhouse*) and *Facundo*, however not with the aim to favor civilization over barbarism, but rather to lay bare the unresolved tension between both in contemporary Argentina and in broader Latin American society. A close analysis of *El ciudadano ilustre* shows that, at least in Latin America, dialectic concepts have all but died, thus challenging the postmodern trend of dissolving them along other supposedly “outdated” binarisms (such as center and periphery).

*Keywords:* Argentina, Civilization, Barbarism, Latin American Film

Films featuring a writer as a protagonist have been increasingly popular over the past few decades, including those which are not of a biopic but purely fictional nature. Think of the German film *The Lives of Others* (*Das Leben der Anderen*, 2006), the Italian movie *The Great Beauty* (*La Grande Belleza*, 2013), and the Argentinian film that I will discuss here, *The Distinguished Citizen* (*El Ciudadano Ilustre*, 2016), are just a few examples of this trend.<sup>1</sup> *The Distinguished Citizen*’s plot is simple and straightforward, with an important twist in the final chapter of the film (aptly called “the hunt”), where the protagonist is being hunted down. The film’s protagonist is Daniel Mantovani, a writer who has left Latin America for Europe, where he became a successful writer and where he now lives a comfortable life in the city of Barcelona. Mantovani fully identifies with the old continent’s culture, where he lives an eclectic lifestyle. *Although Mantovani identifies with Europe, the novels he writes are all about Argentina’s hinterland, more specifically the people of Salas, a small town about 750 kilometers from the capital, Buenos Aires.* And even though throughout his career he has largely remained in the shadow of public attention, now he has become an internationally celebrated writer after winning the Nobel Prize, making it difficult for him to stay out of the spotlights. Mantovani decides to accept an invitation to return to his hometown in Argentina, to receive the local honorific title of “Distinguished Citizen” (*ciudadano ilustre*), while also teaching a few lectures and participating in some local events.

However, Mantovani is clearly at odds with his hometown Salas, its culture and lifestyle which he has always perceived as primitive and back warded. Salas and its people cause a deep alienation and visible rejection in him, with exception of the brief encounters with a few persons; Irene, the love of his youth with whom he exchanges some memories. Irene is now stuck in an unhappy marriage to a local peasant (Antonio) who ends up shooting the writer. Mantovani is also pleased by discovering that the young receptionist at the local hotel dreams of becoming a writer, thus reminding him of his own ambitions as a youngster who dreamt of escaping Salas’s mediocrity and boredom, as well as its

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<sup>1</sup>*The Lives of Others* (*Das Leben der Anderen*, directed by Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck 2006), *The Great Beauty* (*La Grande Belleza*, directed by Paolo Sorrentino 2013), *The Distinguished Citizen* (*El Ciudadano Ilustre*, directed by Gastón Duprat and Mariano Cohn 2016).

engrained corruption and violence which becomes apparent when for instance he notices a sign on a shop window informing that the store has been closed because of an assault). A few days after his arrival, Mantovani is already being perceived as an enemy. The ‘distinguished citizen’ quickly becomes a *persona non grata*. The grim atmosphere turns violent and eventually Mantovani himself is being attacked by Antonio, his so-called “friend” and Irene’s husband. The film, however, does not answer one important question: did Mantovani actually die after being shot?

In one key episode –the book presentation-- he shows the scar of the bullet that apparently had nearly killed him. Indeed, in the final part of the film (in what seems to be an epilogue), just after we have witnessed the presumed killing of Mantovani, we suddenly see a writer in good shape who addresses the press during a Q and A session that follows the presentation of his book, titled “El ciudadano ilustre”. This twist in the story introduces the movie’s two-folded ending, which suggests that what has been narrated was either 1) an autobiographic (or auto fictional) account, of a tragic episode of Mantovani’s life: the writer visited his hometown but somehow recovered and returned to Barcelona, after being badly wounded (yet not killed). This hypothesis would explain the scar shown by Mantovani to his audience. The ambiguity indeed reaches its height when the writer suggests that a bullet had indeed pierced his chest. Thus, Mantovani finally imposes the idea on his readers (and critics) that “reality exceeds fiction” (“la realidad supera a la ficción”); or, 2) “pure” fiction: the whole story is just the product of Mantovani’s imagination (regardless of whether he really visited Salas). Whatever is the case, the film’s open ending is highly ambiguous and casts doubts over the writer’s fate: did Mantovani die? Was everything we saw (as spectators) just a product of his imagination as a writer? In short, we are left in a twilight zone wondering whether the whole film was a purely fictional episode, or an autobiographic *mise en scene* of Mantovani’s life, now presented as a novel?<sup>2</sup> It’s also significant that the film is divided in different “Chapters”, just like a novel. As these different “chapters” roll out, we can sense Mantovani’s increasing sense of frustration and regret of having accepted the invitation to return to Salas, a place which he hated and rejected as a young adult, and where he now has become the direct object of hatred.

Moreover, the bestiality of the shooting of Mantovani as if he were a game animal in a barbaric hunt clearly echoes with a famous short story of Latin American literature: “El Matadero” translated as “The Slaughterhouse”, by Argentinian writer Esteban Echeverría. The slaughterhouse presented in this short story, published in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, is a metaphor for Argentina’s deep divide between two opposite groups: *unitarians* and *federals*. While the unitarians wanted a centralized government, the federals opted for decentralizing power. Esteban Echeverría’s short story, “El Matadero”, published in 1871 (although it was written between 1839 and 1840,) has become one of the most important short stories in Latin American literature. Mantovani’s fate uncannily reminds of the character in Echeverría’s story: the nameless young unitarian (*Joven unitario*). Both Mantovani and the young unitarian ended up being shot like animals. There are important differences: in the film there are no allusions to the Bible. Unlike the movie, the short story draws a clear parallel between the *unitario*’s fate and the life of Jesus Christ, while the butcherers are ironically referred to as *apóstoles* (*apostles*).

What is key now is that the *Federales* are incapable, or unwilling, of recognizing any humanity in the *unitario*, who in turn they interpret as barbaric (“salvaje[s] unitario[s]” [savage Unitarians]). The late Bulgarian-French critic Tzvetan Todorov searched for the roots and meaning of the very concept of barbarism in ancient Greece and Rome: the Gauls were seen as barbaric to the Romans, but so were the Romans in the eyes of the Gauls. The barbarians are “those who deny the full humanity of others. This does not mean that they are really ignorant or forgetful of their human nature, but that they behave as if the others were not human, or [not] entirely human.” (Todorov 16). For Todorov, “barbarism, in

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<sup>2</sup>The festive character of *El ciudadano ilustre* and the change of tone remind us of the film *Festen* (*The Celebration* [1998]), directed by Danish director Thomas Vinterberg. While in *El ciudadano ilustre* the end is more ambiguous than in the former, there is a dark and tragic tone to both films behind the festive mask. *Festen*, like *El ciudadano ilustre*, starts with a celebration, not a Nobel Prize, but Helge’s birthday; yet the ambiance quickly turns gruesome as dark family secrets are being revealed during the party. As in the Argentinian film, and with a surreal twist, the celebration continues, until things get worse, and tragedy strikes at the end.

the absolute sense, consisted in *not recognizing the humanity of others*, whereas its contrary, civilization, was precisely this *ability to see others* as others and yet to accept at the same time that they were as human as ourselves” (Todorov 195; my emphasis).

Could we thus argue that the film repeats the same idea expressed in Echeverria’s “El Matadero”, that the divide between *civilization* and *barbarism* persists? that in contemporary Argentina – as much as in the 19th century – things have practically remained unchanged? Is there really a sharp social, political and cultural divide that cannot be overcome, between (European) *civilización* and (Latin American) *barbarie*? This conflict between Civilization vs Barbarism became one of the paradigms of 19th century Latin America. I argue that this paradigm indeed persists, yet in different ways. Rather than celebrating the fading away or postmodern dissolution of an opposition that has deeply marked Latin American history and literature, *The Distinguished Citizen* comes back to it with a vengeance, to show the deep divisions inside Latin American society, both in terms of social classes and economic stagnation.

The film shows that the “hard” binarism – civilization *versus* barbarism – is still relevant, up to our days, yet with some important changes. From an ideological perspective then, and contrary to “El Matadero” and *Facundo*, the film is, I argue, on the fence between both terms: it does not simply choose civilization as good versus barbarism as evil. Nor does it simply condemn violence and barbarism as an unwanted yet inevitable by-product of a civilized society. Rather, the film arguably exposes that violence originates in the misperception of the other as a non-human being, i.e. as someone who is *perceived* as lacking humanity. In one of his lesser known articles, “Beyond barbarism”, the German sociologist Niklas Luhmann (best known for his Social systems theory), had a particular view on the dialectics of barbarism vs civilization, which he framed in terms of exclusion vs inclusion. In a controversial move – and not without ironic wit – Luhmann expressed the West’s (European) nostalgia of ancient times where ‘barbarians’ were easily identifiable:

With a certain nostalgia we can now think back to the barbarians or to the other ethnicities, the pagans, the savages. They were left with their own social order. We did not have anything to do with it. We were free to convert them or to enslave them, or to cheat them when exchanging goods. And it was our concepts, European concepts, when we spoke of *humanitas*, of *ius gentium*, of humankind or of human rights. All this is no longer adequate in the situation modern society finds itself in – not to speak of concepts such as *societas civilis* or *communitas* that we are getting from our basements like *Sauerkraut* to enjoy them reheated (Luhmann 46)

Rather than simply cynicism or irony, Luhmann makes an important point: The Western relation to –and fear of– barbarism has undergone (and is still undergoing) important changes. He suggests there’s a need to innovate the old terminology and conceptual toolbox, as many oppositional concepts (including “colonialism” and “imperialism” I would add, as well as recent attempt to refashion some of them, such as the more problematic term “coloniality”) are no longer useful to adequately express complex realities in a globalized world.<sup>3</sup> *The Distinguished Citizen* is thus more than a simple allegory of Latin American society, exposing the persistence of a dichotomy between, on the one hand, respect for the natural, spontaneous and primitive character of the locals, and the artificiality of “Civilization”, of Latin America’s European legacy.

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<sup>3</sup>In contrast to what Walter Mignolo (2007) and others suggest, applying the term ad infinitum and without much historical evidence to contemporary Latin America. Although Mignolo (2007) defines *coloniality* and *colonialism* as two different “logics”, he clearly struggles to differentiate both terms: “Coloniality is the logic of domination in the modern/colonial world, beyond the fact that the imperial/colonial country was once Spain, then England and now the US” (7). Moreover, his reasoning appears to be trapped in an infinite polarization of “us” (Latin Americans) against “them” (the West).

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## Envisioning Classical Play from a Modern Art Perspective - “Relationship” in *Prometheus Bound*

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### Abstract

*This paper draws on a new interpretation from a phenomenological approach that utilizes modern dance theory as a tool for imagining a classical text. It includes literary analysis and artistic visualization, with a focus on reinterpretation of the classical Greek play, Prometheus Bound, specifically the relationship among Prometheus, Io, and Zeus. Laban movement analysis and Bartenieff fundamentals are used as a means to cultivate the reader’s visualization ability. Visualization is the process by which the brain translates linguistic text into movement dynamics and—in so doing—empathize with the author that their written work is not static but lively and flowy. The primary goal of this study is to compensate for the disadvantage of classical reading with the facility of modern art theory. Findings show that art supports literary analysis; literature provides a framework to utilize art theories, and the two disciplines can be interwoven regardless of the time and culture that they were born from.*

*Keywords: Laban Movement Analysis, Bartenieff Fundamentals, Prometheus Bound, Visualization*

### Introduction

Visualization is often used to facilitate readers as media to embody emotion and ideas through written text, images, concepts, or pictures. The purpose of this study is to sense and imagine classical text, in particular for the general population to develop the ability to empathize with literary descriptions through artistic ability. There were two sections used in developing this process. Literary analysis was first presented to unfold the character’s relationship. This presentation was followed by an alternative form of modern art category—visualization—to further imagine the characters’ movement dynamics through the lens of Laban movement analysis and Bartenieff movement fundamentals. The result of this paper shows that interdisciplinary analysis can articulate a reader’s way of drawing pictures and empathizing with abstract readings. This finding encourages further development of research on the impact of art theory as a tool for humanities studies that heavily rely on non-modern linguistic text or abstract concepts.

### Related works

#### Re-interpretation of *Prometheus Bound*

Aeschylus’ *Prometheus Bound* [1] has a rich content worth studying across literature, translation, political science etc. Regardless of the angle of analysis from various fields of scholars, most of the interpretations of this play lean towards linguistics or politics. This is because the characteristics of this play themselves embody the criticism of monarchical power and at the same time sympathize with and praise social reformers. Few scholars have interpreted the aesthetic value of this play. First, because the writer, Aeschylus’ composing method tends to be simple and cohesive, the words and sentence structures he uses are mostly in flat narration, repetition and statement-making. However, emotional renderings or inner conflicts are occasionally depicted either in monologue or dialogue. Since the physical activity of the hero is restricted, and as a prophet, Prometheus’ feelings lack ups and downs, what makes this play relatively weak in artistry is that the hero has only verbal output without emotional or physical performance. The closest account that leans towards performing arts is the scholar J.M. Mossman’s “Chains of Imagery in *Prometheus Bound* [2]”. The terms of “imagery”, “figurative”,

“literal”, and “non-figurative” are highlighted in detail in the article. “...an image-metaphor is understood directly, one end of which I have called ‘figurative’ (i.e. where concepts are conveyed to the greatest extent by means of structures imported from other domains), the other ‘non-figurative’, or occasionally ‘literal’ (i.e. where concepts are to be understood and are structured mostly on their own terms). Needless to say, individual images can only be placed on this scale relative to one another, and this need not, and indeed cannot be done with any great precision.” Mossman’s view contains a cross-ideal reinterpretation by stating that “concepts are conveyed through other domain”, which we will explore in the later discussion along with the interdisciplinary analysis in this paper.

In *The Imagery of the Prometheus Bound* [3] by Barbara Hughes Fowler, the author mentions the exact languages as “mind”, “body”, “space”, and “energy”, analysing the play from the perspective of drama, but overall, the research process lays into the category of traditional literary analysis. Our intention is to move far beyond using literature to analyse literature itself. Thus, the second half of this paper will continue unfolding the same words in detail, as the scholar Fowler mentions but from the artistic point of view.

### **Laban and Bartenieff Fundamental as Analytical Tools**

As an architect, Rudolf Laban’s dance notation is created based on math, architecture, and anatomy, using such detailed methods as body postures (body), space route (space), movement rhythm (time), and level of strength (energy). It breaks down artistic visual effects to a scientific recording system. His student, Irmgard Bartenieff, had developed Bartenieff fundamentals that focus on integral body performances highlighting non-verbal communication. The former artist had presented art relying on our eyes and brain, inclining towards emphasizing recording and analytical ability. Irmgard Bartenieff then moved beyond Laban’s empiricism to mind–body connection i.e. from visual to intuition. Both theories together help readers understand the relationship between two major characters in the play and how their movement dynamics determine the plot of the tragedy.

Among the many interdisciplinary studies on Laban notation, “Chains of Imagery in *Prometheus Bound*” by J.M. Mossman discusses the transformation of art into literature that draws my attention. The core argument of it is to describe the sequence of dance through metaphors and help realize the formalism of action in linguistic literature. The example the author gave in the article uses the modern dancer Merce Cunningham’s sequence phrases.

“Cunninghamesque movement-isolations, contortions, counter-rhythms. Suddenly, coolly, as if his head had nothing to do with what is on his body’s mind, he cancels out all those conflicting energies by slashing an obscenity across a caricature he has drawn of him [4]”

This research shows the reverse process of my work. We intend to use the art form to extract obscure language to achieve the visualization of abstract and classical concepts and then use the matched, obvious art theory to return to the text and complete the literary criticism with the assistance of the manifestation of the art.

In the following discussion of this paper, the method of using art in literary criticism is similar to what the scholar Becky Dyer proposed under the idea of “trying to connect aesthetics with social politics [5]”. “Movement can be seen as a way to interpret normal and abnormal behaviour within a group and to view change and influential social factors within a society.”

Dyer chooses to focus on the analysis of “Effort” in Laban notation. The author believes that “Effort” can reflect social effects through observation and analysis of individual behaviour. “Warren Lamb, a contemporary of Laban, further developed Laban’s theoretical framework as a tool for recognizing and understanding individual personality traits through systematic observation and analysis of phrasings of Effort that can be observed and read in an individual’s movement [5].”

This paper is going to focus on the term “Relationship” rather than “Effort” from Laban’s theory. Although both words can analyse social phenomenon through individual actions, “relationship” draws out interacting dynamics between major characters rather than zooming in on an individual’s behaviour.

### **Literary Analysis from the Angle of “Relationship” in *Prometheus Bound***

*Prometheus Bound* [1] involves multiple relationships and conflicts between the two communities: gods and humans. The most fundamental conflict is between Prometheus and Zeus regarding the former’s theft of forbidden technology. By giving fire to the inferior race—human beings—Prometheus becomes a representative of a lower class in opposition to his primary community, the gods. In fact, it is clearly stated in the play that mortals are classified as a blind race. “Didn’t you see the weakness, the trance, that fetters all of their blind race? Their plans can never evade the orchestration of Zeus [1]” (Sophocles, Aeschylus, Euripides 549–551). Io is the only mortal in the play. Besides her direct conflict with authority in the forms of Zeus and Hera, there is no direct conflict between Io and the other gods. It is a class conflict that connects Prometheus and Zeus, while gender, class, and ethical issues connect Zeus and Io. Thus, the play leads to a question about the relationship between Io and Prometheus: what do they have in common that led to their discussion about existentialism, starting from Io’s grievance? The relationship between Io and Prometheus must be studied in detail first before delving further into the plot’s development and the philosophical debate about the distinctions between gods and mortals.

Aeschylus arranged Io and Prometheus’ accidental encounter with the hidden intention of gradually laying the groundwork for the following conversation between the two. In most Greek versions of the story, the primary female character in relation to Prometheus is not Io but Pandora. Pandora also represents part of the fundamental conflict between Zeus and Prometheus and between humans and the gods. She was sent as a gift (objectified) from Zeus to retaliate against Prometheus—representing humankind—so that she can be categorized as the political pawn (someone mortal but with divine beauty/talent) of the higher class. Aeschylus chose Io, an ordinary mortal, to form the third point in the triangular conflict between her, Prometheus, and Zeus. As the character that connects Prometheus and Zeus, Io’s words form an irreplaceable part in the play, and the secret to Zeus’ downfall is revealed during the conversation between Prometheus and Io. From their discussion of suffering, the conversation turns to the essence of existence—due to the three characters’ different identities.

The playwright’s rhetorical use of an “accidental encounter” related to the dance term “incomplete effort” paves the way for a form of anticipation—which shifts the weight to what will be discussed next.

(entering in wild confusion, her form partly that of a cow)

What place?

What People? Whom do I see here?

He is chained to the rocks and beaten by storms!

You there—what crime are you paying for? Tell me,

What land have my miseries brought me to?

(Struck by sudden pain) Ai! Ai! Aiee! Aiee!

That stinger—it sticks me again, again!

It’s Argus’ ghost—the earth-born monster? (561–566) [1].

Io’s first reaction forms an incomplete effort, according to Laban’s movement notation. “Incomplete effort actions can be seen as transitions between one basic effort action and the next” [6]. In literature, an incomplete effort is a question without answer. After starting with a series of questions, Io’s actions then shift abruptly from being passively confused by the “where” and “who” to making a clear decision to seek help from Prometheus. Prometheus here functions as a stable object—one who is both mentally peaceful and physically bounded. Io, in contrast, is the mobile character who initiates the dialogue by asking for help and is seemingly guided “unintentionally” by the fate that brought her bodily to Prometheus (but the author does nothing unintentionally).

### **Empathizing and Visualizing of “Relationship”**

When applying the “Bartenieff fundamentals”—developed by dance theorist Irmgard Bartenieff (Hackney 49) [7]—as a medium to analyze these two characters, we find that the movement and

temperament of Io reflect female characteristics. Prometheus, on the other hand, complies with masculinity. Table 1 is a specific correspondence between the two characters and Bartenieff's movement themes developed from the modern dance theorist Irmgard Bartenieff.

**Table 1:** Two Character's Polarities to Bartenieff's Four Movement Themes.

Prometheus	Io
Outer (obvious conflict against Zeus)	Inner (potential rebel)
Function (advisor, social reformer)	Expression (emotionally driven lower class)
Exertion (mentally providing information)	Recuperation (mentally seeking for direction)
Stability (physically stable)	Mobility (physically mobile)

Prometheus lowers himself down to the mortal world—both by being physically bound in the Caucasus Mountains and by epistemologically and mentally sympathizing with mortals. Meanwhile, Io had travelled far, coming from Asia—viewed in the play as being in a barbaric state—to the centre of the stage. Aeschylus choreographed their encounter to be seemingly accidental but orchestrated. From their paths, in terms of space, we can see that the former travels vertically, representing Prometheus' subjective willingness to stoop below his social class. The latter character, Io, travels horizontally—representing culture subversion. Specifically, Prometheus' and Io's encounter happens while Prometheus's body is bound—and therefore static—in the Caucasus Mountains.

Meanwhile, Io is travelling from a "barbaric" state when she accidentally approaches Prometheus. Prometheus' stability creates masculine energy, a framework. Io's wondering and suffering present an unstable mode—showing female mobility as a flowing, formless being. We can see this duality to be further reflected in their dialogue when Io makes an incomplete effort with neither a verbal nor a behavioural statement. Her bodily action demonstrates her current emotional and physical state: confused and wandering.

Prometheus takes over Io's energy by answering her question, drawing out a picture of her future, as one critic explains below.

Io's journey is presented in five separated stages, each geographically and culturally distinct. Io herself first recounts the origin of her journey in Argos (640–86). After the Chorus laments her tale, Prometheus describes her forthcoming ordeals in Europe (705–35). After a brief dialogue with Io, he narrates her route through Asia to the Nile delta (788–815). Then, to confirm his powers of foresight, he demonstrates his hindsight by recounting her path from Argos to the desolate site of the play (824–41) (White 117) [8].

Their starting dynamics determine Io as the focal point. She is the one who catches the audience's eyes—in the same way that a female dancer on stage often grabs the audience's attention. She is mobile and expressive, vulnerable but dancing out her inner struggle. Thus, although the play is named *Prometheus Bound*, we see that Io is also restricted—both mentally and physically. From a performance perspective, Prometheus is a stable supporter, both physically and emotionally—one who answers and guides Io through the rest of the play in the same way a male mover would support his female partner who dances expressively around his body. The star actor in this duet is Io—the mobile energy presenter. With the cooperation of stability and mobility, function and expression, outer and inner, exertion and recuperation, Prometheus and Io had performed a harmony duet in contributing to the future fall of tyranny.

## Conclusion

Literature and performing arts do not necessarily belong to different studies; classic and modern studies can merge across time if necessary. Through the medium of modern dance theory, readers can

understand language-based information and its critical ideas as well as artistry. Among various theories that were involved in the research, visualization plays a strong role in understanding a given literary framework, relating insights to performing arts and the relationship between cerebral analysis and non-verbal imagination. On the other hand, Laban notation and Bartenieff fundamentals provide a lens for critical inquiry into literary concepts and in essence a greater awareness of the body and mind connection.

In this paper, modern art was viewed as a tool for analyzing classical literature. This study shows that the language of performing arts can translate static information from written text to lively dynamism. However, each field studies its unique theories that developed from its own lineage. The Greek playwright Aeschylus' "relationship" is not the same as the view of "relationship" captured in Laban's modern concept of bodily movement. For interdisciplinary studies that contain more than one subject that across time and culture, future research could consider distinguishing the linguistic meaning of the same word in different fields or similar concepts that overlap each other when utilizing one to interpret the other.

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## **Mother Tongue Interference in Second Language Acquisition and Remedial Pedagogy: A Sociolinguistic Perspective**

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### **Abstract**

*The function of a language teacher is to develop the ability in his students to use language as a means of social interaction and make them aware of the meaning of certain linguistic forms and variations. The proposed study will look forward to review the sociolinguistic factors especially mother tongue interference in second language acquisition. The study will make the learners understand the function of English as a second language (ESL) so that they can gain proficiency in its use by their intellectual involvement in it. It will provide a theoretical framework within which the findings of sociolinguistics will be related to linguistic terms. The study aims at illustrating communication differences in the users through task-based teaching. It will also do an error analysis and provide data for remedial pedagogy of second language acquisition. The study also intends to suggest ways of making the present syllabus in universities compatible with the various sociolinguistic factors which will lead to enhancement of knowledge of the researchers and trainers to understand the relation between language and society, in terms of global social factors and categories which lead to affect semantic, syntactic and lexical use of ESL. Finally, this study will provide new trends to second language acquisition especially in India. It will concentrate on the learners coming from typical Hindi-medium backgrounds so that they can use English with the same proficiency they use their mother tongue. The work will aspire to transfer the learning of English into acquisition of ESL.*

*Keywords: Language, Communication, Linguistics, Literature, ESL*

### **Introduction**

Knowledge of a language means knowing the rules which control the formation of sentences. By regulating these rules one can combine different units of language and produce infinite number of sentences. This kind of knowledge is not necessarily a conscious knowledge of language but an intuition by which one can find correct and incorrect sentences. It is altogether a different matter though that, this kind of intuition does not ensure appropriateness of form which is a part of sociolinguistics where the structurally correct sentences are evaluated in a 'social vacuum'. So here the situational use of language is of vital importance.

As language serves as a means of communication, it involves the people in some kind of social interaction. Thus, knowledge of language includes two things. The first one leads to correctness of language or formal use and the second leads to appropriateness of language use or informal use of language. So, the rules of language and the conventions regarding their deployment in actual situations are factors that constitute knowledge of language. 'Sociolinguistics is the study of language in operation; its purpose is to investigate how the conventions of language use relate to other aspects of social behaviour'.

Most of the linguists find the rules of grammar worthy of scientific and systematic investigation. Saussure and Chomsky also make a distinction between the rules of language system and separate them from the people who use them. They make two categories, first is 'langue' (Saussure) or 'competence' (Chomsky) which is the knowledge of rules of a language; and 'parole' (Saussure) or 'performance' (Chomsky) which is the realization of these rules in speech. It is considered to be idiosyncratic. These linguists do not think that individual acts of speaking are socially constrained in the way language is. They involve psychological, physical and social constraints. But this approach is too limited for the language teacher. He is concerned with describing 'competence' and 'performance' at the same time.

Like the sociolinguist he is concerned with the middle area between 'langue' and 'parole' or 'competence' and 'performance'. It is the study of systematic part of 'parole' or 'performance' that is the major point of emphasis. Thus, sociolinguistics also has relevance to language teaching. Sociolinguistics is made of two words social + linguistics [society + language] which studies the social factors which affect the use of language.

As sociolinguistics is the study of language in operation, situation acts as a stimulus which triggers of the message and without stimulus there can be no message. Thus, sociolinguistics factors are the inseparable parts of study in any language. Among these factors' interference of mother-tongue is the major one which affects second language acquisition.

The 'acquired system' or 'acquisition' is the product of the subconscious process very similar to the process children undergo when they acquire their first language. In this subconscious effort the students engage themselves in comparing their mother tongue with the second language. It may prove easy and useful sometimes when there is any similarity between the first and second language. For example, in Hindi we have formal as well as informal forms of 'you' i.e. *tum* and *aap*. Similarly, in French the informal one is *tu* and formal is *vous*.

But if the two languages are very different then it becomes hard to learn that language (SL) and it leads to mother tongue interference. This is because the learner finds the language behaviour and values of second language just opposite to his own language.

For example, in Hindi in an affirmative the verb comes as the last element as – SOV, SOAV etc. while in English the verb comes immediately after the subject as SVO, SVOC, SVOCA etc. as: -

Hum            Hindi bolte hain. (Hindi)  
S        O            V  
We speak Hindi. (English)  
S        V            O

Similarly, the learners may make many mistakes because of the influence of mother tongue in the use of prepositions and articles. The Indian learner will write or say:

'It is ten o' clock in my watch.'

The learner uses 'in' instead of 'by' because in Hindi it is

*Meri Ghadi mein dus baje hain.*

Sometimes the learners generalize the facts of mother tongue in second language acquisition; which causes errors in the use of English. For example, they add the plural suffixes of English with Hindi words to make like *bookein, callein, tablein* instead of 'books', 'calls' and 'tables'.

These kinds of errors in second language acquisition are caused because the teaching method or teaching strategy in the school is not suitable due to overdependence on grammar translation method resulting into mother tongue interference. To check this, a proper remedial pedagogy must be used which is based on communicative language teaching and task- based approach.

### Critical Review

The history of sociolinguistic research is very old. In this field narrations between language have been noted for millennia; by Yaksha in his *Nirutka* (500 B.C.); Patanjali (2008 CE); Bharta in his *Natyasastra* (500 CE); and Abul-Fazl ibn Mubarak in his *Ain-e-Akbari* (C 16th CE). The classifications of languages, particularly with regard to regional differences and to so-called 'hybrid' languages, continued to progress during the 19th century. From 1881, language information was explicitly sought in the census, which found a total of 162 languages in India (116 Indian languages and 46 foreign languages). Questions about language continued to be included in 10 yearly censuses in the following years, and in 1896 George Abraham Grierson began his linguistic Survey of India, in which he tried to classify Indian languages on morpho-phonemic differences. One of the French linguists Jules Bloch

also published a study on caste dialects in 1910. He studied Indian languages, and was also interested in languages in their cultural contexts. Early Indian Research into Sociolinguistics can be said to have begun in the early 1960's. Charles A. Ferguson published *Diglossia* (1959) on variation as a developmental and functional phenomenon of language. While John J. Gumperz, an American linguist and academician, wrote on linguistic aspects of caste differentiation in 1960. His researches on the languages of India, code-switching in Norway and conversational interaction have benefited the study of sociolinguistic, discourse analysis, linguistic anthropology and urban anthropology.

In the mid-1960's William Labov, an American linguist, added an interesting variation within the speech of caste. For his M.A. thesis (1963) he completed a study of change in the dialect of Martha's Vineyard. The methods he used to collect data for his study of the varieties of English spoken in New York City, published as *The social stratification of English in New York City* (1966) has been influential in social dialectology. In the late 1960s and early 1970s his study of the linguistic features of African American Vernacular English (AAVE) were also influential; he argued that AAVE should not be stigmatized as substandard but respected as a variety of English with its own grammatical rules. Following Bloch's 1910 work on caste dialects, further studies were carried out in the 1960's by (among others) McComark, in an attempt to discover the origin and method of transmission of caste dialects and by A.K. Ramanujan, comparing the kinds of language innovation between Brahmin and non-Brahmin dialects of Tamil. John Bright wrote on some semantic and structural differences in sociolinguistics. Murray Barnson Emeneau (a U.S. linguist) wrote a classic paper entitled 'India as a linguistic area'. Praboda Becharadas Pandit focused on sociolinguistic aspects of convergence and language shift. A number of studies have looked into the sequence of acquisition of pronouns by learners of various Indo-European languages. These are reviewed by Ellis (1994). They show that learners begin by omitting pronouns or using them indiscriminately. Learners then acquire a single pronoun feature, often person, followed by number and eventually by gender. Little evidence of interference from the learner's first language has been found. It appears that learners use pronouns based entirely on their inferences about target language structure. Research on the sequence of acquisition of words and pragmatic features has been exhaustively reviewed by Nation (2001). Kasper and Rose (2002). In both the fields, consistent patterns have emerged and have been the object of considerable theorizing. Stephen Krashen (University of Southern California) is an expert in the field of linguistics, specializing in theories of language acquisition and development. Much of his recent research has involved the study of non-English and bilingual language acquisition. The proposed work includes the study of new trends and styles in English language which affect its structure, vocabulary etc. This leads to new varieties in English and their standardization. The study will contribute significantly by bringing to light the sociolinguistic factors which make second language acquisition more comprehensible from a social perspective. It will focus on the errors made by learners in second language acquisition because of mother tongue interference.

### **Research Methodology**

The proposed work will be an empirical research based on surveys conducted on undergraduate students from different colleges affiliated to the University of Rajasthan and also English users in Rajasthan from different age groups, gender, social and academic backgrounds and the data collected. Data will also be collected from various private companies and call centers to check on the varieties in use and the effect of mother tongue on English.

For this 'multiple choice' and 'open ended' questionnaires will be administered. The questionnaires will primarily focus on vocabulary and structures and also try to check the learner's awareness on the standard varieties viz. British and American English along with Indian English. Comparison will also be made between old and new movies, dictionaries and advertisements, in terms of semantics, syntax and lexis. Effort will also be made to check how new technological innovations like e-mails and SMS are leading to the evolution of a new varieties of English.

### **Social and Academic Relevance of the Study**

The study will be relevant both socially and academically. It will make the users of English aware of the varieties of English and the sociolinguistic factors that influence second language acquisition in India. Error analysis of the second language (English) and contrastive analysis with the mother tongue can lead to remedial pedagogy.

After being aware of the social and educational background of the learners the language teacher can adopt a suitable teaching method which will vary from one teaching situation to the other to provide them remedial pedagogy. The teacher can make them aware of the difference between certain linguistic aspects like vocabulary, structure etc. which are affected by mother tongue interference. By observing the errors which the learners have made because of overgeneralizations and interference of mother tongue, the teacher will be able to clarify the basic differences between the syntactic, semantic, phonetic variations in the two languages and provide valid suggestions. Once the learner is aware of the supposed overgeneralization s/he can avoid such errors. While teaching, if the teacher is aware of the shortcomings of his learners, he can adopt a suitable and effective teaching technique. Thus, the study has an important academic function as it will probe into pre-teaching, during teaching and post teaching strategies to be adopted by the teachers. The study will be of great help in the area of language testing, where the teacher can concentrate on giving questions focusing on the social factors. The research will be of immense help to ESL learners as they can understand the role and function of these sociolinguistic factors in a better way, and remove the effect of mother tongue while acquiring the second language.

Beginning with the definition of sociolinguistics which is the study of 'language in operation', it will touch upon the early theories by Saussure and Chomsky and clarify technical terms like 'langue' and 'parole' and 'competence' and 'performance' respectively; as parole or performance is directly linked to 'the use of language'. It will concentrate on the factors leading to mother tongue interference in terms of second language acquisition by providing related examples. It will focus on the incompatibility of present teaching strategies, along with suggestions for remedial pedagogy.

Second Language Acquisition: It will define second language acquisition. In the words of Stephen Krashen,

'Language acquisition does not require extensive use of conscious grammatical rules and does not require drills; it requires meaningful interaction in target language - natural communication - in which speakers are concerned not with the form of their utterances but with the messages they convey and understand'.

It describes different stages of second language acquisition like 'silent period', 'period of language shock', 'self-talk period' etc.

### **Varieties in English and standardization of Indian English:**

It deals with varieties of English especially Indian English. It will bring to notice some words of Hindi which are accepted in the common core of English like *Biodata, Dhoti, Sati, Bindi, Loot, Laathicharge, Ghee, Basmati, Kalash, Kurta, Yoga, Lakh, Samosa, Jungle* etc.

Compare the other standard varieties of English with Indian English in terms of semantics and structure. For example, in Hindi we do not have the aspect of perfect continuous and we use the sentence like- 'It is raining for two hours', instead of saying – It has been raining for two hours. Likewise, 'set the milk to curd', by an Indian learner of English will be said as 'Freeze the milk'. There can be numerous other examples of this kind. Another one is 'The station has come', instead of 'We have reached the station.'

### **Sociolinguistic Factors Affecting Second Language Acquisition:**

The focus on the role of sociolinguistic factors which affect second language acquisition like academic and social background of the learner, including the type of society whether bilingual, monolingual or multilingual; and the academic background like suitability of teaching method with regards to the needs of the learner.

It will deal with mother tongue interference in teaching and learning of English as a second language especially in the Indian context; along with some overgeneralizations which affect it.

### **Remedial Pedagogy in Second Language Acquisition:**

The term ‘pedagogy’ and concentrate on method and techniques suitable for teaching ESL students. The chapter will focus on remedial pedagogy in second language acquisition through communicative language teaching and task-based approach and feasibility of methods like direct, situational and bilingual.

### **Conclusion:**

The concluding chapter will bring to light the present and future of sociolinguistics and suggest related areas open to research. It will also show the contribution of proposed research in remedial pedagogy, error analysis, contrastive analysis and communicative language teaching. The proposed work will reveal its importance in learning and teaching of ESL with special reference to Indian learners.

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## Literature and History: Re-reading Ngugi's Early Novels from a Postcolonial Perspective

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### Abstract

*Literature and history are distinctive fields of academic disciplines whose intersection has generated endless scholarly debates in several national and international conferences over the years. One face of this intersection is the way writers, particularly in the Third World, have used the literary medium of fiction, drama, as well as poetry to reclaim their tented/distorted past misrepresented by the First World. These are writers, who have written masterpieces so as to re-create the true version of their history through works of art in Africa, Asia, Middle-East, the Caribbean for instance who should in the opinion of the West see themselves and their history through the history of their former colonial mentors. This is the focus of this paper. It re-reads Ngugi wa Thiong'o's early novels: namely Weep Not Child, The River Between, A Grain of Wheat, demonstrating how Ngugi re-writes through fiction the factual history of Kenya and by extension Africa at large, contradicting the European literary writers and their history counterparts who have misrepresented Kenya which by extension denotes Africa in their literary and history masterpieces. It analyses the texts through postcolonial literary theory, using the theoretical views of Edward Said, Franz Fanon, Walter Rodney, Albert Memi, Ngugi wa Thiong'o for example. This unveils not only writing back by the empire to the centre but also showcases history in literature and literature in history as an inseparable mutuality of duo controversial concepts.*

*Keywords: Literature, History, Post-colonialism, Writing Back*

### Introduction

If one grows doubtful that Europe, or the "imperial centre" has not in any way misrepresented Africa and the residue of colonized others in other parts of the globe in its literary and historical masterpieces, then the words of Edward Said in *Culture and Imperialism* might shatter into pieces, such a baseless assumption: "and now these writers can truly read their colonial masterpieces, which not only misrepresented them but assumed they were unable to respond directly to what had been written about them" (35). No, they have for Salmon Rushdie, Derek Walcott, Aime Cesaire, Chinua Achebe, Pablo Naruda and Brian Friel, some of the crop of African and Caribbean literary writers, to whom Said refers here have circuitously reacted to the colonial masterpieces in question which have misrepresented them: some in fiction and others in context.

However, one writer not mentioned here by Said (albeit he mentions him in several other places), whose response is as phenomenal as these writers is Ngugi wa Thiong'o; the Kenyan novelist, playwright, essayist and critic. In both his early and later novels, Ngugi retorts to the misrepresentation of Africa, which the European writers of fiction and their history counterparts depicted as a dark continent, hence, devoid of history and its people were savage and primitive hence devoid of culture until the advent of the Whiteman, who found the African man and proffered him the culture he lacked, and yet, he so much desired. This extraordinary, artistic commitment is an embodiment of the empire's reaction against the writings of the metropolitan centre or Europe in its bid to "reclaim its tainted past" (Barry 192). For Said, "Certainly, as the title of a fascinating book has it, writing back to the metropolitan cultures, disrupting the European narratives of the Orient and Africa, replacing them with either a more playful or more powerful new narrative style is a major component in the process" (23260): the process of reclaiming the distorted/misrepresented past by the empire. Quoting Michael Doyle in *Culture and Imperialism* (236) Said argues that "empire is a relationship, formal or informal, in which

one state controls the effective political sovereignty of another political collaboration, by economic, social, or cultural dependence". Said's view evokes the picture of Africa (empire and the rest of the Third World) Europe (the centre) relationship in which Africa is economically appendage to Europe as the basis of Europe's supremacy over it. This is not astonishing, given the etymological origin of the concept which is derived from the "Latin word imperium, meaning command, authority, rulership or more loosely, power" (Colas 6).

In his book *Ngugi's Novels and African History: Narrating the Nation* Ogude argues that narrative, particularly the novel, has tended to provide Ngugi with the space to imagine Africa's history which he believes has been repressed by colonialism. He has insisted, correctly that his writing is very much part of Kenya's (and by implication Africa's) historiography and the theorising of its political economy (231). Ogude is right for fiction has been Ngugi's major retaliatory medium much more than drama to write back to the centre in a voice that is distinctively African. Moreover, Ogude is right for fiction Ogude must have adduced Fanon's view, who argues that: "it is a question of the Third World starting a new history of man, a history which will have regard to sometimes prodigious thesis which Europe has put forward, but which also not forget Europe's crime" (314-15). Indeed, the crime is not only of physical and psychological exploitations, but also of misrepresenting Africa's past which Ngugi and other writers in Africa and elsewhere set out to address.

However, it is pertinent to note that this Eurocentric, historical distortion of the other has an intellectual genesis/root. This is no other than the German Philosopher, thinker, and romantic Gorg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. In *The Philosophy of History*, Hegel is of the view that:

Africa proper, as far as history goes back, has remained for all purposes of connection with the rest of the world, shut up. It is the gold land compressed within itself, the land of childhood lying beyond the days of self-conscious history is underdeveloped in the dark mantle of the night. The Negro is already observed, exhibits the natural man in his completely wild and untamed state. We must lay aside all thought of reverence and morality, all that we call feeling, if we would comprehend him. There is nothing harmonious with humanity to be found in this type of character. At this point we leave Africa never to mention it again for it has no historical part of the world. It has no movement of development to exhibit. Historical movement in it, that is in its Northern part, belongs to the Asiatic or European world. What we properly understand by Africa is the unhistorical, underdeveloped spirit still involved in the condition of mere nature. The history of the world travels from East to West, for Europe is absolutely the end of history, Asia the beginning (109).

Hegel's standpoint about Africa as underdeveloped world, inhabited by savage human creatures that behave like animals, devoid of moral values and without history has a great deal influenced numerous European thinkers, and the renowned few among them include David Hume, Anthony Trollope and Trevor Roper. It is this that has spilled over to innumerable European literary writers and historians: the neo-Hegelian disciples who have taken it upon themselves to propagate profoundly Hegel's fallacious and racist's view on Africa. The implication lies in that African history began with the advent of the Whiteman who found the "unknown" African man wherever he might be hiding, or even made him, which marked his existence era, and further civilised him which cured the African man from his culture ill. Griffith writes "these are writers, whose novels reflect the new interests and concern of the postcolonial. Such models emerged of course as African writers responded to the need to redress and reassert the past in their own terms" (51). True to Griffith's standpoint for the essence of writing back by Ngugi and of course many other writers in the Third World is not just to react against dehistoricizing their past but also to address the tainted past so as to unveil the Eurocentric fallacy of the European writers of fiction and their history counterparts.

### **Eurocentric Misrepresentation of African History and the Novel**

Let us focus on the European literary writers and historians charged with this Eurocentric crime and how Ngugi responds to them in his early fictions. The British novelist, Daniel Defoe, credited with publishing the first European novel in European literary history ever, is one of these innumerable writers. In *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), Crusoe's depiction of the island which he conquers, following the wrecking of his ship and the black man he comes across unveils the Eurocentric misrepresentation of Africa: My island was now peopled, and I thought myself very rich in subjects; and It was a merry reflection which I frequently made, how like a king I had an undoubted right of dominion. Secondly my people were perfectly subjected: I was absolute lord and lawgiver; they all owed their lives, if there had been occasion of it, for me. It was remarkable too, we had put three subjects, and they were of three different religions. My own Friday was a protestant, his father was a pagan and a cannibal, and the Spaniard was a papist; however, I allowed liberty of conscience throughout my dominions (157).

Moreover, In *Heart of Darkness* (1902) by Joseph Conrad, Marlow, the first-person narrator through whom Conrad sees events and through whose mind he sees into the mind of other characters, describes the Africans he spots, as his ship sails towards Congo, shortly after he is employed by the Brussels trading company that trades there, as a steamboat captain: "the steamer toiled along slowly on the edge of a black and incomprehensible frenzy. The *prehistoric man* was cursing us, praying to us, welcoming us who could tell?" (63). Thus, "my island" in *Robinson Crusoe* expresses among other things a world single-handedly founded by Crusoe, and "my Friday" is the black man he finds and names. By implication his history began with Crusoe's arrival. Similarly, the epithet 'prehistoric man' in Marlow's narrative delineates the African man not only as a unique creature lacking an origin or root, but uncivilised. What is more, much earlier prior to his journey to Congo, Marlow's description of the river in a shop window map resembling an "uncoiled snake" and its "head is in the sea", "its body is at rest" and "its tail is lost in the depth of the land" (304) is misrepresentation-ridden. Contrasting the river with a snake, which coiled or uncoiled is a caricature of Africa as a savagery world associated with danger and violence by Conrad. The river, thus symbolizes Africa. Commenting on *Heart of Darkness*, the renowned postcolonial critic Edward Said argues that: "Kurtz and Marlow, the former as he is dying, the latter as he reflects retrospectively on the meaning of Kurtz final words. They (and of course Conrad) are ahead of their time in understanding that what they call the darkness has an autonomy of its own and can reinstate and reclaim what imperialism had taken of its own" (33), a patriotic commitment which Ngugi has set out to do through the art medium.

Ngugi's reaction against this Eurocentric fallacy is undisguised and unequivocal. His aim is to prove these European writers not only erroneous but fallacious, unveiling that one's history begins from one's origin, as he corroborates this in *The River Between* "for a people's roots were in their traditions going back to the past, the very beginning, Gikuyu and Mumbi" (141). Who are Gikuyu and Mumbi? How do they constitute the Kenya's humble beginning? Following the wind, rain thunder and horrendous lightening, which throw Kenya's land into total gloom and the animals into unprecedented panic, with some dying, and the plants and the trees uprooted in *Weep Not Child*, something is on the verge of occurring in Kenya:

But in this darkness, at the foot of Kerinyaga a tree rose. At first it was a small tree and grew up, finding a way even through the darkness. It wanted to reach the light, and the sun. This tree had life. It went up, sending forth the rich warmth of a blossoming tree----- you know a holy tree in the dark night of thunder and moaning. This was Mukuyu, God's tree. Now, you know that at the beginning of things there was only one man (Gikuyu) and one woman (Mumbi). It was under this Mukuyu first put them. And immediately the sun rose, and the dark night melted away. The sun shone with a warmth and give life and activity to all things. The wind and lightning and thunder stopped. The animals stopped wondering and moved. They no longer moaned but give homage to the creator and Gikuyu and Mumbi. And the creator who is also called Murungu took Gikuyu and Mumbi from his holy-mountain. He took them to the country of ridges near Siriana and there stood them on a big ridge before he finally took them to

Mukuruwe Wa Gathanga about which you have had so much. But he had shown them all the land ---- yes, children,

God showed Gikuyu and Mumbi all the land and told them, that:

This land I hand over to you. O man and woman its yours to rule and till in serenity sacrificing only to me your God, under my sacred tree... (23-4).

Gikuyu (man) and Mumbi (woman) symbolize the ancestral origin of Kenya. In other words, they are the root from which the modern Kenya was “born” and in whose hands the land was first bestowed by ‘Murungu’ the Kenyan’s god under their care. In *The River Between*, Ngugi unveils the pious significance of ‘the scared tree’ and what transpires afterwards through Chege, who takes his son Wayaki there, in order to reveal to him the secrets of the land: That is a blessed and scared place. There where Mumbi’s feet stood, grew up that tree. So, you see, it is Kameno that supported the father and mother of the tribe. Murungu took them and put them under Mukuruwe wa Gathanga in Murunga. There our father and mother had nine daughters who bore more children. The children spread all over the country. Some came to the ridges to keep and guard the ancient rites..... (18).

The above narrative piece tells us a little more about the man and woman that founded Kenya but also how their descendants have formed the tribes to which Kenyans could trace their lineage.

In *A Grain of Wheat*, Ngugi repeatedly mentions and frequently refers to Gikuyu and Mumbi: the “father and mother of the tribe”. The most fascinating thing is that he even identifies some of the principal characters with such names: Gikonyo and Mumbi, who afterwards marry off as husband and wife. Ngugi once more reveals the veracity to us that “the African writer found his image of the past distorted. Through his colonial middle-class education, he found that he had no history. The black man did not really exist. He had slept in a dark continent until the Livingstone’s and the Stanly’s woke him into history through a gentle prod with a Bible and a gun” (*The African Writer and His Past* 6). For Ngugi, the European explorers and missionaries the likes of Livingstone’s and Stanly’s did not discover the African man in their exploration expedition and their evangelical activities in the continent, but he long existed prior to their arrival and he was not living in darkness or primitiveness, owing to lack of culture, but rather, he had his ways of life whatever they may be which was not savage as the Europeans assumed it to be.

Coupled with that is the misrepresentation of the history of the Kenya’s Land and Freedom Army (KLFA) misnamed the Mau Mau by the European literary writers and historians so as to distort its image. Considers what Ian Henderson shamelessly says in *The Hunt for Dedan Kimathi* (1958):

EARLY IN THE AFTERNOON of the seventh of October, 1952, Chief Waruhiu was shot and killed seven miles outside Nairobi. He was murdered in the best Chicago style: His car was forced to a halt by the side of the road, and three gunmen walked over to him and opened fire at point-blank range. The chief’s funeral was impressive. It was attended by several thousand of his fellow Kikuyu tribesmen. The new Governor, Sir Evelyn Baring, was there, and so was Jomo Kenyatta, then the most prominent African politician in Kenya. The size and eminence of the congregation were in part a tribute to Waruhiu’s position and personality. He had been a chief for thirty years and had received the M.B.E. earlier that year. It was also recognition of the extraordinary circumstances surrounding Waruhiu’s death. This was just one of many murders and acts of violence ascribed to Mau Mau, the secret, subversive movement that was growing increasingly bold. A few days before his death Chief Waruhiu had condemned Mau Mau. The bullets in his head and stomach were the terrorists’ reply (6).

Moreoso, “the *terrorists* rarely moved or operated by day, and hardly ever attacked any soldier or civilian who had a chance to protect himself. By day all was usually peaceful. By night the *terrorists* swept over tribe’s reserve and settled areas, taking food, taking money and taking life” (13). In these extracts Henderson depicts the Mau Mau as violent, secret, subversive and worst a terrorist movement. No, this is a historical fallacy for as a liberation movement fighting for land; it had to be violent if the settler colonialists were to leave Kenya. Their attacks were not secretive but tactfully open and the movements’ secret oaths of unity were meant to bind its members to the course they fought for. What is more, how could a liberation movement that fought for the freedom of its people and to regain its appropriated land as clearly defined by its demands be a dissident and a rebellious movement?

Fred Majadalan is another European historian at the centre of this historical distortion. In *State of Emergency: The Full Story of Mau Mau*, (1962) quoted by Ngugi in his collection of essays *Homecoming* Majadalan reports that: If (the Mau Mau Emergency) could be said to have begun when the first European settlers came to the country and in good faith tried to impose their own ways and their idea of civilization on a group of primitive peoples still living in something akin to the stone age.

The view of Majadalan is unequivocally clear. The Kenyans were savages when the European settlers arrived and brought civilization to them. The most disheartening of all is the life these savages led as Majadalan claim which was animalistic. These misrepresentations are compatible with Mr Howlands’ in *Weep Not, Child* and Thompson’s in *A Grain of Wheat*. Pacing up and down across his office as the D.O. Mr Howlands expresses his disenchantment with the Mau Mau. “Who were black men and Mau Mau anyway, he asked for the thousandth time? Mere savages! A nice word---- savages. Previously, he had not thought of them as savages or otherwise, simply because he had not thought of them at all, except as part of the farm---- the way one thought of donkeys and horses one had to think of their food and a place for them to sleep” (77). Similarly, Thompson, a man who symbolizes colonial power in Kenya let the reader to for the first-time glances at his diary’s entry in *A Grain of Wheat*. “Colonel Robson, a senior District officer in Rung’ei, Kiambu, was savagely murdered; I am replacing him at Rung’ei. One must use a stick. No government can tolerate anarchy no civilization can built on this violence and savagery. Mau Mau is evil: a movement which if not checked will mean complete destruction of all the values on which our civilization has thriven” (49). The Mau Mau forest fighters for Howlands and Majadalan are not even human-beings let alone savages, but animals, while for Thompson the movement is malevolent owing to its resistant, violent tendencies against the British civilizing mission. If the Mau Mau is evil the profound implication is that it was not a liberation movement but a terrorist movement and its leaders and forest fighters were rebels/traitors/dissidents, not freedom fighters instead. Consequently, it’s clearly defined goals for fighting the white man were contradictory as well. In response to Majadalan, Ngugi laments:

With the popular image of the Mau Mau as something purely evil atavistic and completely unrelated to the mainstream of African nationalism or any decent political sentiment, to most Africans, Mau Mau in fact was heroic and glorious aspect of the mainstream. The basic objectives of Mau Mau revolutionaries were to drive out the Europeans seize the government, and give back the people their stolen lands and property. It is not surprising that it was anti-European and anti-Christian. What else did Majadalan expect? That the oppressed would go singing hymns of praise to the people that oppressed and exploited them for over sixty years (28).

No, they would dare not to do that, but to fight against the oppression and injustice of their people as the leading goals of the movement. Consequently, the killing of Mr. Howlands and Jacobo, who appropriate people’s land, arrests, and severely torture and sometimes kill people unjustly by Boro, the leader of the movement in *Weep Not Child*: the setting of huts ablaze and the plot to assault the Whiteman by the Kiama which subsequently metamorphoses into Mau Mau in *The River Between*, the annihilation of the Mahee Police Garrison, the murder of D. O. Robson and Teacher Muniu by Kihika in *A Grain of Wheat* has not turned the Mau Mau evil/malevolent, which the European historians and

the British colonial administrators in the novel presume it to be, just because it avenges the crime of confiscating its land and the unjust killing of its people with the murder of some of the prominent European colonial officers and destroying the colonial superstructures. Ngugi response but this moment to Ian Henderson, defines the meaning and intention of Mau Mau's onslaughts:

Violence in order to change an intolerable, unjust social order is not savagery: it purifies man. Violence to protect and preserve an unjust, oppressive social order is criminal, and diminishes man. To gloat in the latter form of violence, as Ian Henderson does in *The Hunt for Deden Kimathi*, is revolting. In Kenya, then, we were confronted with two forms of violence. The British perpetrated violence on African people for fifty years. In 1952, once the political leaders were detained, the colonial regime intensified its acts of indiscriminate terrorism, thereby forcing many peasants and workers to take to the forests. For about four years, these people with little experience in guerrilla warfare, without help from any outside powers, organized themselves and courageously resisted the British military forces (29).

So, for Ngugi thus, the British colonial forces were the terrorists and not the Mau Mau instead. The Mau Mau is thus a liberation movement which fought an unjust violence with just violence, and its leaders: Harry Thuku, Waiyaki, Dedan Kimathi, Jomo Kenyatta, Hassan Kotelel Stanley Methange, Mekitalili, Ole Masai, Boro, Kihika, were not rebels or traitors but freedom fighters instead. This is why Msiska argues that "Ngugi attempts to situate the Mau Mau movement in history of the Kenyan nationalist struggle and to demonstrate that, as has sometimes been claimed it sprung from a history of incessant colonial brutality" (236). The Mau Mau anti-colonial war for Msiska was part and parcel of the Kenya's nationalists' struggle and it emerged with the advent of the settler colonizer in Kenya as the true Mau Mau history which Ngugi wants to portray. This unadulterated version of Kenya's history is what the countries pioneer historians the likes of Were, Muruiki and Ochien who were hired by the British and handsomely paid them to re-write Kenya's history from the Eurocentric eyes tried to subvert.

## **Conclusion**

This paper has explored the literature-history intersection, unveiling the controversial disposition of the term history just as the concept of literature and further demonstrating the interplay between the two concepts. It then takes a selective focus on one of the faces that brings the two closer, as European literary writers and their history counterparts both of whom influenced by European philosophers the likes of Hegel in the First World have misrepresented the African history, which Kenya exemplifies in Ngugi's three early novels, through the literary medium. The paper has quoted textual portions from the European literary writers' texts and their historian counterparts to prove this assertion on the one hand. It then turns its epistemological attention on how Ngugi one of the literary voices representing the Third World has responded to this Eurocentric fallacy associated with African history through the medium of fiction quoting from his three early novels to contradict these European writers and at the same time to attest that Kenya and by extension Africa has its history long prior to the advent of the European on its soil and thus its history, culture inclusive did not begin with their arrival, all through the theoretical views of postcolonial theorists such as a Edward Said, Franz Fanon, Walter Rodney, Albert Memi, Ngugi wa Thiong'o for example on the other hand.

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## **Functions of English Discourse Markers on Facebook Among Umaru Musa Yar'adua University Members of Academic Staff**

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### **Abstract**

*This paper examines the use of English Discourse Markers with the aim of investigating their Communicative Functions on Facebook as used by UMYUK members of Academic Staff. The paper is analysed using qualitative approach and Relevance Theory by Sperber and Wilson (1995) to highlight and examine DMs in different communicative contexts. In the course of data collection, five (5) Academic Staff from the five Faculties of the University who are already Facebook friends of the researcher are used as the participants with their consent. The paper examines the communicative functions of English DMs among UMYUK Academic Staff on Facebook and reveals a number of communicative functions used in different contexts. One of the major findings indicates that "Contrastive Markers" such as "but", "however", "although" etc. are the dominant communicative functions employed by UMYUK Academic Staff on Facebook with 42% occurrence; it also shows that a single DM can function differently in the same linguistic environment.*

### **Introduction**

The study of discourse markers has recently attracted researchers' attention to investigate the communicative functions they serve in both spoken and written discourses. These items are known variously by scholars who used different terminologies to describe them. Such terminologies include: discourse markers (Schiffrin, 1987; Fischer, 2006), discourse connectives (Camicotolli, 2010), discourse particles (Palacio and Gustilo, 2016) etc.

In addition, DMs have been given different meanings by a number of researchers; this indicates that the definition is also as controversial as the terminology. But what is central to most of these definitions is their inability to affect the grammatical correctness of a sentence when absent, but leaves a sentence pragmatically impaired as Brinton (1996) would say. However, a few definitions are used in this paper: Swan (2005) views a discourse marker as a "word or expression" which shows the connection between what is being said and the wider context. According to him, a discourse marker connects a sentence to what comes before or after; it indicates speaker's attitude to what he is saying. He gives three examples which are; on the other hand, frankly and as a matter of fact. In addition, Aijmer (2002) emphasises that Discourse Markers have been grammaticalised which has resulted in a class of words with unique formal, functional and pragmatic properties. Nevertheless, neither sentence grammar nor logical semantics has had much to say about them, they are difficult to analyse grammatically and their literal meanings are 'overridden' by pragmatic functions involving the speakers' relationship to the hearer, to the utterance or to the whole text.

Researchers working in this area have made several attempts in investigating the uses and functions of DMs in English and other languages, and in written and spoken contexts. However, functions of DMs among Nigerian academics have not been dealt with extensively despite the frequent use of social media platforms in human communication in this era of Information Technology (IT). The fact discourse the previous researches in this area are: Li (2016); a study that investigates the analysed every day conversation of some American people and found that the use of DMs in conversation is important for it makes utterances acceptable and negotiable for the interlocutors and failure to use them can hinder communication. Another related study was conducted by Zhao (2014); the study examines textual functions of DMs under the framework of Relevance Theory by Sperber and Wilson (1995). It was found that the textual function of DMs is to construct textual coherence and DMs when adopted in

communication can ease hearer's search for optimal relevance of utterances and add discourse coherence.

## **Methodology**

The data were gathered from the conversations of UMYUK Academic Staff on Facebook. The data were collected and sampled purposively which implies that only active users' profiles are used in this paper. Using the researcher's Facebook friends, ten (10) posts from five (5) participants including their feedbacks are analysed using relevance theory by Sperber and Wilson (1995). However, for the purpose of this paper, the researcher analysed only two (2) posts with their comments to serve as example. In order to establish reliable and valid research methodology in the process of investigation, the researcher selects one (1) participant from each faculty of the five faculties of the University which amounts to ten (10) posts. The paper also adopts a qualitative approach because it solely deals with linguistic features and explores social phenomenon of DMs naturally. The research is qualitative because the whole data collected are in textual form. In addition, qualitative research is suitable for describing and interpreting DMs on Facebook because it employs a naturalistic way of understanding phenomena in real world settings. In this paper, the data is coded under the following items: Post/comment; DMs; and Communicative function of the DM in a particular context.

## **Theoretical Framework**

Hinrichs (2006) and Peuronen (2013) argue that a universally accepted framework that specifically accounts for Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) has not yet been developed. As a substitute, researchers adopt frameworks originally developed for the analysis of spoken and written discourses even though some scholars view such theories as inadequate. In view of this, this research adopts Sperber and Wilson's (1995) Relevance Theory as the theoretical framework. Thus, the data are analysed using cognitive, communicative and contextual principles of Relevance Theory (RT). The DMs collected in the wall posts and comments of UMYUK Academic staff are analysed based on the context they are used in order to examine the communicative functions DMs serve in writer/reader interaction via Facebook.

## **Data Analysis and Findings**

As mentioned earlier, the posts analysed in this paper are only two (2) out of the ten (10) posts identified. This is justified by the fact that the analysis is qualitative which requires interpretation, and all the ten (10) posts including their comments cannot be analysed in this relatively short time and space.

Post 1

Analysis

<b>S/N</b>	<b>DM(s)</b>	<b>Communicative Function(s)</b>
1.	As	discourse initiator
2.	I think	Clarity
3.	I mean	Clarity
4.	But	counter argument
5.	If	conditional marker
6.	Hence	logical consequence
7.	Now	introducing another topic

Analysis

S/N	DM(s)	Communicative Function(s)
8.	But	Counter argument
9.	If	Concession
10.	But	Introducing another topic/counter argument
11.	I mean	Clarity
12.	But	Counter argument
13.	So	Introducing another point
14.	And	Claiming/holding the floor of conversation
15.	But	Introducing another point
16.	But	Showing contrast
17.	However	Showing contrast
18.	Also	Additional information
19.	However	Showing contrast
20.	But	Showing contrast
21.	Well	Clarity
22.	So	Logical consequence

In the above discourse markers identified, interlocutor B responds directly to the claim of this theory that mutual cognitive environment is constantly negotiated and renegotiated throughout the conversation. What supports this claim in this comment is the use of the DM “but”, which clearly indicates counter argument as Dülger (2007) asserts in his findings. It explains that, despite interlocutor B’s agreement and understanding of the suggestions by interlocutor A, there is an assumption that lack of education may be a barrier on the move. Interlocutor C also shares interlocutor A’s views by the use of “if” as a DM which serves the function of concession in the context that the group would be listened to by the governor but then comes up with another assumption as claimed by the theory. The assumption indicates that when few people go as representatives and not the said groups, the initiative would only be a failure. Also, the use of “but” in the comment at sentence initial subjects it to perform yet another function which is initiating a topic in that particular context.

S/N	DM(s)	Communicative Function(s)
23.	Because	Claiming/holding the floor of conversation
24.	But	Showing contrast

Analysis

S/N	DM(s)	Communicative Function(s)
25.	Indeed	Common knowledge or emphasis
26.	Though	Showing contrast
27.	But	Counter argument

In the above feedback, interlocutor B uses “indeed” to indicate that the communicated preposition represents common knowledge. The DM shows that the views shared by interlocutor A are well known and therefore gives a suggestion to solve the problem which according to this theory is an assumption.

Post 3

Interlocutor A: Indeed, the abuse of human right is in itself, a manifestation of lack of democracy in a society.

Post 2

Analysis

<b>S/N</b>	<b>DM(s)</b>	<b>Communicative Function(s)</b>
28.	Indeed	Common knowledge

Analysis

<b>S/N</b>	<b>DM(s)</b>	<b>Communicative Function(s)</b>
29.	And	Claiming/holding the floor of conversation

Analysis

<b>S/N</b>	<b>DM(s)</b>	<b>Communicative Function(s)</b>
30.	Ohh	A sudden reminder
31.	Oh yeah	Sarcastic agreement
32.	Okay then	Participation/terminating conversation

<b>S/N</b>	<b>DM(s)</b>	<b>Communicative Function(s)</b>
33.	Indeed	Common knowledge
34.	Indeed	Common knowledge

S/N	Communicative Functions	Frequencies	Percentages
1.	Discourse initiators	2	10.5%
2.	Clarity	4	21%
3.	Counter argument	4	21%
4.	Conditional marker	1	5%
5.	Logical Consequence	3	15%
6.	Introducing another point	4	21%
7.	Concession	1	5%
8.	Introducing another point/ topic/counter argument	1	5%
9.	Claiming/holding the floor of conversation	4	21%
10.	Contrast	8	42%
11.	Additional information	1	5%
12.	Discourse initiators /common knowledge or emphasis	6	31%
13.	Sudden reminder	1	5%
14.	Sarcastic agreement/surprise/unbelief	2	10.5%
15.	Participation/ terminating conversation	1	5%
16.	Showing attitude	2	10.5%
17.	Summing up discourse/a point	1	5%
18.	Agreement/ agreement/terminating conversation	5	26%
19.	Opinion/perception	1	5%
	Total	52	100%

### Research Findings

The major findings of this paper show that the DMs that function as “Contrastive markers” dominate the most Communicative Functions used by UMYUK Academic Staff with 42% as the highest percentage; the DMs in this category include “but”, “although”, “however” etc. While DMs that function as both “Discourse initiators and common knowledge”, and those that show “Common knowledge” only occupy the position of second dominant communicative functions of DMs used by UMYUK Academic Staff with 31%; the DM in this category is “indeed”. The third category of communicative function goes to DMs that indicate “agreement” and those that show both “agreement and terminating conversation” with 26%; the DMs in this category include “yes”, “yeah”, “yep” etc. The last category of Communicative functions goes to four groups that function as “clarity” (“I mean”, “I think”, “well” etc.), “counter argument” (“but”), “introducing another point/topic” (“now”, “so”, “but” etc.) and “claiming/holding the floor of conversation” (“and” and “because”) with 21% each.

Another finding indicates that DMs contribute a great deal in the interpretation process between interlocutors and they are multifunctional items. It can also be seen that a single DM can function more than once in the same linguistic environment signaling different meanings. This can be seen in the data presented and analysed where “indeed” functions as both “common knowledge” marker and as “discourse initiator”. In this case, one function does not interrupt the other in any way. It is also shown in the data that “but” functions as a “contrastive marker”, “Introducing another point”, and “counter argument” marker. This finding supports the claim that DMs are multifunctional items as argued by different researchers such as Oghogho (2016).

One of the findings of this research slightly collaborates with Li’s (2016); Zhao (2014); Palacio and Gustilo (2016); and Ogoanah and Adeyanju (2013) on the importance of DMs as textual elements

which construct textual coherence and their roles as aspects of human communication. The markers also ease the search for optimal relevance by interlocutors. However, none of these findings tried to investigate the dominant communicative function on Facebook platform.

## **Conclusion**

DMs might be considered unimportant in discourse but play crucial role in human communication in different linguistic environments. They no doubt contribute extensively in guiding the interpretation process between interlocutors while at the same time allow smooth flow of discourse where they appear; in cases where they are absent, the discourse would be pragmatically impaired. We can see from the above analysis that UMYUK Academic Staff use English DMs on Facebook platform even without knowing their communicative functions. Also, the number of communicative functions found in their conversations clearly indicates that abundant markers are used in their Facebook walls. The theory used for the analysis which is Relevance Theory fits perfectly as used to figure out pragmatic implications on the use of these items; it shows that DMs contribute greatly in the interpretation process between interlocutors and minimise the processing effort needed in comprehending the message.

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## **Time, Narrative & La Durée - or, Why We Need Instability and Multiplicities Against Reductionism**

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### **Abstract**

*This study takes a new direction in taking time as the movement, which gives life to matter. Narratives in literature are capable of creating a-new while putting words in movement. Words assembled in timely manners not only provide them with movement but shape their meaning. In narratives, time can be extended, reduced, paused, and even discontinued. Bergson's la durée (1910), together with Prigogine's instable thermodynamics (1984, 1992), when seen through the lens of narratives in its use of the unpredictable and the unexpected produce multiple layers of time. Authors create parallel worlds, and this can be done in music and many other art forms. In literature, la durée gives movement to the narrative, as well as memory gives life to the past. Thus, time can be stretched or shrink, create multiplicities - lead to oscillations. All of this creates instability, the reason to keep the reader reading and our living. Life and literature are assented in unpredictability. Bergson's la durée and Prigogine's instability will be used to develop a time theoretical approach towards narrative and literature. Journals and diaries provide excellent documentation to demonstrate how authors explore time's multiplicities while narrating their stories. This instability, memory, and la durée are going to be argued to lead to reflexive thinking. When actual society uniforms time creating one unique linear chronology, it pasteurizes narratives and meanings into reductionism, making critical thinking limited.*

*Keywords: Time, Narrative, Bergson's Time, Critical, Literature*

### **Introduction**

"My soul has the weight of the light, the weight of the music, the weight of an unspoken word, the weight of a souvenir," Clarice Lispector Brazilian writer on a piece of paper at the hospital at the age of fifty-seven before dying - note donated by the family to Moreira Salles Institute (IMS, 2020).

Taking the concept of time in Bergson's approach (1910) – as the movement, which gives life to matter, this small note left by the author sums this study's approach - linking time and literature against reductionism. Time is multiple, irregular, conflicting, sacred, controversial, mysterious, contradictory, uncertain, intuitive, and even enigmatic.

Time is such a fascinating topic, but it does not exist. Psychology has been changing the way it addresses time, "This renewed vigor represents the rebirth of the recognition of the centrality of the psychology of time in human cognition and behavior" (ALLMAN, PENNEY, MECK, 2016). Although, time is spoken through many forms and formats, for instance: "an inch of time," "on the verge of time," "as time goes by," "time-frame."

The linear, domesticated movement also became a dreamland-commodity sold and negotiated (PELOQUIN, 1991). Paradise would sound like "free-time." As a by-product artifact, the time has been used and abused in today's society to such a point that anyone's wish is to have time for themselves. However, many people do not know what to do with free-time when they have it (THOMPSON, 1993). Time discussions are vital aspects of occupations nowadays but are far from wished dreamtime, Pemberton, and Cox (2011).

Change is also sold and packed with timely resolutions. "The unexpected never surprises us," says Emily Dickson in a note (EMILY DICKINSON ARCHIVES). If unexpected change is certain, it did not seem society was prepared seen in the case of COVID-19. To work from anywhere now means

home. Moreover, although it may sound like an appealing, flexible schedule, everything is here and now. The feasibility of presenteeism stroke everyone during the pandemics (JOHNS, 2012), and it meant workers were working almost non-stop.

Reducing the multiplicity of times to everything “online, here and now” may have wider impacts on our lives than the extension of working hours. For instance, “please leave your message after the tone” can already be showing how techno-time may be creating a timeless and placeless world. Everything can last forever in the now.

Bergson’s time is very much the opposite. It is the time of intuition, memory, and *durée*. In this time, anyone can go back in time and recall a lovely scene a million times. In this time, a second can change everything. In this time, humanity is capable of changing the future. “A violent love or a deep melancholy... here we feel a thousand different elements which dissolve into and permeate one another without any precise outlines” (BERGSON, 1910).

Together with technological time, there also media time and now even more with social media. Following McLuhan (1964) concept to understanding media, he proposes that the medium and not the content should be the focus of research. The media-frame changes how we communicate. *What if the period does the same?*

Social media time and consuming time – led to one of the most striking commands of the actual society – using experience questionnaires to drive data to decision-making. Memory and history may lose their importance once what matters is the best-rated experience. From flying an airplane to medical consultation, even paying tax bills, there will be a questionnaire after using your time for future decisions. All of this has nothing to do with reflexive thinking.

In the text “Language as a weapon,” Fairclough (1982) argues that by following orders - when language is associated with action, leaving no chance or time between a command and its execution – anything is possible. When the soldier says: “Shoot,” - a noise is heard! The army trains its soldiers to leave no gap between command and action. Only when language permits a “tempo” - a space of doubt, reflection, critical thinking, then the soldier may stop and not shoot. Without gaps, disconnections, disruptions – critical thinking is limited.

Full of certainty and dis-historicized, multiplicities seem to be reduced by techno-language in which only one context and meaning are possible. There is no infatuation inside the language, or “*Should I stay, or should I go?*” *Where is ambiguity? Where is creativity? Where is the invention of new languages and expressions?*

In Bergson’s time, *la durée* is the perception of time passing by and what gives meaning to what goes on – it is the possibility of new meanings being born. Duration thus assumes the illusory form of a homogeneous medium and connects these two terms, space, and duration in simultaneity - the intersection of time and space (BERGSON, 1910). *La durée* is making sense out of experience and observations. A toothache, the reading of a book, and artwork development cannot be measured in chronological time. *La durée* is in the narrative, with its multiplicities, oscillations, movements, pauses, collapses. It is the intuition of what is lived, the infinite possibilities, and critical thinking explosions (VIEILLARD-BARON, 2008). Here, even the reading of a book can be a life-changing event. A toothache that came and left a hundred times during sleepless nights can be meaningless sometime after it. Here, *la durée* is not found in experience-questionnaires but the note that Clarice Lispector wrote before leaving this world.

The multiplicities of time bring new meanings to what is around. “The strangest dreams, in which two images overlies one another and show us at the same time two different persons, who yet make only one, will hardly give us an idea of the interweaving of concepts which goes on when we are awake. The imagination of the dreamer, cut off from the external world, imitates with mere images, and parodies in its way” (BERGSON, 1910).

Opposite to that, in the pasteurized-online-home-office society, *I sometimes wonder what our siblings did during long winter times inside caves to entertain themselves*. By the way, *why are we not learning with them?* Back in 2000, with the frenetic millennium turn, it was possible to notice a specific criticism towards technology. The “bug” of the millennium could eventually create a tremendous mess

in data society, with ultimately unpredictable catastrophes. Some people were extra cautious about it, and some of them even took money from the bank in case machines could cease working (MARTINS, 2017).

Nowadays, reduced to confinement, any minute can seem like an eternity for this highly interconnected data society. In this “new normal,” there appears to be considerable similarity between the groups I had workshops with at the prisons and the actual lockdown-everyone. In both, there are dreams about the future, which sustain the present. At some prisons, reading is a means to survive and a way to diminish their sentence.

During the reading and writing workshops, most of them enjoyed the opportunity to ponder about one’s life - a way reframing it, - being critical upon oneself. The workshop worked as a momentum where they could finally rewrite their stories. Maybe, likewise, Clarice did at the hospital - reinventing oneself.

“We call it intuition,” Bergson (1910) would rather say. The proper use of intuition, Bergson believes, will open new questioning lines, which may turn to the reform of certain thoughts. In sum, philosophical interventionism is the price one must pay to acknowledge the ontological weight of initiating reflexive thinking.

Sympathy is also needed to be transported in the interior of an object in order to coincide with what there is unique and consequently inexpressible in it (BERGSON, 1910). This transport of intuition-sympathy is similar to trying to express something inexpressible. Metaphors, analogies, rhythms play an intermediary role between intuition and abstractions.

If intensity and duration are two ways of experiencing the world, our central argument in this paper is that techno-experience reduces reflexive-critical thinking while literature reinforces it. The multiplicities of time can happen when we live something intensively and extraordinarily. Living intensively seems to be an attribute to small-minded people though a track in artist, writers, poets, actors, and people who have nothing to lose.

For Bergson, science is not enough – our perceptions are multi-layered (DURING, MIGUEL, DANTON, 2020). Language can create new worlds and observation might show them. Whenever someone speaks, all times are brought together. This is not a controllable action neither a predictive one (POSMAN, 2012)

A sense of déjà-vu, instinct, intuition - all disjointed and scattered, creating time as multiple as it can possibly be. As conceived by Bergson, intuition provides the driving force, but it can only become precise when its scope is focused. Science can reach the absolute, and intuition has need of science to be communicated, conveyed - in order to function.

For Bergson (1910), perspective is a plurality of the modes of existence, but this plurality is not distributed in layers of complexity levels, but rather in mixed pieces and happenings.

This study aims to compare – productive-time by one side x Bergson’s creative time at the other side. The last, which may produce uncountable possibilities.

## **Methods and Materials**

It is not enough to study time as an individual category as Psychology does, nor as a social construct like Social Sciences does. In Ricouer (1975), time occupies a central place in the world model that characterizes culture, as for Gourevitch (1975: 263) this category of the social brings “the essential components of social consciousness, whose structure reflects the rhythms and cadences that mark the evolution of society and culture.” Hall (1989: 03) says that time is “a system that supports personal, social and cultural life” with its values, rhythms, and senses. Elias (1989: 84) describes it as “a frame of reference that serves the members of a certain group and ultimately instance, for all humanity, to institute recognizable rites within a continuous series of transformations.” Castoriadis (1982: 243) points out that each society is a way of making time and doing, which means making yourself a society. Levine (1997) sees it as the base of civilization, capable of offering precious ways to enter the universe of human relations.

In none of the above, time is taken in its powerful and central position. “The uniformity and neutrality of time is part of its actual illusion. Time has certainly become a fundamental issue for all sciences since it raises problems central to the understanding of any phenomena under investigation,” Nowotny (1994: 07). According to Whitrow (1993), there are two ways of conceiving time, 1) one that starts from the assumption that time does not exist and 2) another that takes it as fundamental, of which everything originates. Conceptions of time oscillate between one and another. Therefore, “studying time can perhaps help to correct this erroneous image of a world with compartments watertight,” says Elias (1989: 25).

Fraser (1990) points out that studying time is similar to putting together a puzzle of moving pieces; each one's meaning will only appear as the parts are assembled. Times can only be understood - in process, in motion. That conflict is impossible to resolve as it lasts as long as our life lasts. This life, circumscribed by what we are - pieces of discursive materiality in movement. Temporarily programmed on the way to our finite certainty, each instance can be potentially transformative, threatening, or replenishing.

For Dilthey (1961:98), the course of life is one of the most critical points for us to understand ourselves while faced with a life circumscribed by birth and death. After all, according to Ricouer (1975), if there were no people to invent and count intervals of time and movements, there would be no times and no changes. In a world without men, there would be no time, Elias (1989).

Conceptions of changes and social rhythms can vary enormously. For Ferrarotti (1990), every society has a basis that regulates these rhythms and movements, and we should strive to understand them because they are how each society dances life. However, with its rhythms and cadences, this dance is also responsible for producing the dynamism and flexibility that modernity needed, says Giddens (1995) - and the lack of time that plagues us (ZELDIN, 1997).

With a significant number of activities, we have a feeling that we are: “... much more dependent on time than any previous civilization” (WHITROW, 1993:203). That excessive temporal dependence generates the sensation of time scarcity, as there is not enough time to do everything that society requires us to do. The rush, together with the anguish of deadlines, of hours, makes us feel helpless in the face of time that passes each faster. For Ferrarotti (1990), this produces the cult of precision and speed and together with these, our greatest irony: “... with all our creations to save time, the people have less time for themselves than ever before!” (LEVINE, 1997:12). In that sense, the rabbit in Alice seems to have its reasons, because “If you knew Time as well as I do,” said the Hatter, “You wouldn't talk about wasting it. It is him...Now, if you only kept on good terms with him, he'd almost anything you liked with the clock...” (CARROLL, 1865:84).

According to Adam (1995:12): “There is no single time, only a multitude of times which interpenetrate and permeate our daily lives.” Prigogine & Stengers (1984:211) also share these multiple concepts: “Each complex being is constituted by a plurality of times branched into each other according to subtle and multiple articulations. The story of any living being or society can never be reduced to the monotonous simplicity of a unique time. Times become like this, including what changes, and what does not change, what it is new or tradition – what is the new millennium and what is not.” For Hall (1989), time is also its language in use and which organizes activities and integrates our social relationships besides being: “... the most widely used noun in the English language” (ADAM, 1995:19).

According to Ricouer (2001), the common quality of human experience: marked, articulated, and clarified by the act of reporting in all its forms is exactly its temporal character. Everything we report - occurs over time, takes time, and develops over time. Our times allow us to give meaning to movements, changes, narratives, as much as to modify them. Heller (1989) highlights the absurd it is to say that time, in different periods, may elapse more slowly or quickly.

In fact, what changes is not time itself, but how recreate it. Times, rhythms, passages. Similarly, past, present, and future do not exist by themselves. For Augustine, “time is a certain distension” (4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> century; 2000:288). It can be capturable by memories of past things and expectations of future things. In between memory and expectation, different temporalities can be accessed through the impression of something that remains; those that escape us; and those that we hope for. Augustine

proposes a new terminology: “present of the past, present of the present, present of future, present remembrance of past things, present view of gift-things and present hope for future things” (AUGUSTINE, 2000).

However, it is worth remembering that Augustine's position is part of his reflections before the act of reciting a poem. *Is it because the telling, narrating, and even declaring of a poem can make it necessary to invent and create from these temporalities?*

Lieb (1991) defines past, present, and future as three types of values: the future, the present, and the past; and there is aesthetic, moral, and historical value, the kind of value that something has in being historically significant. Heller (1987) explains despite the present separating past and future. All serve as practical guidance in everyday living. Nevertheless, as they are not static categories, much the less they have pre-defined values, the time of modern societies ended producing the separation of the past and the present, installing a new tradition: that of dreaming about the future, together with the promise of a better future, while everyone is stuck in the present, what is even tried during the pandemics.

Alternatively, Prigogine & Stengers (1992) write that the question of time, what it preserves, what it creates, what it destroys or its passage, has always been at the center of human concerns. I recently found a poem on a bus that read (Author Silvia, poetry project on the Porto Alegre City bus):

“Time passes,  
People pass  
And I like nature  
I will also pass  
In impermanence, there is a certain consistency.”

The paradox of time is hard to solve because its multiplicities do not lie in science but in literature, films, poetry, and other formats against productive-time and its reductionism. As Miller says (2003), literature is about time. This way, discussions about times, the future, presentism cannot be resolved in the dispute for the truth, in the confrontation of concepts, within the neutrality of science, or through quantifiable data. There are multiple and disruptive temporalities in life.

Consequently, we no longer have a common denominator, and “... each arrangement has its own time ... there is no common time` in´ which common objectives can be reached by means of common causalities”, puts Ermarth (1998:205). This is how “postmodern narratives inscribe a time that has an only local definition, a time that is a dimension of events not a medium for them, a time consistent with a new physics and its new description of nature” (ERMARTH, 1998:205).

## **Results**

The way each culture organizes time reveals fundamental aspects of its social organization. Similarly, the time awareness of members of relatively complex and urbanized societies reveal their social model. For Elias (1989:21) “the transformation of the external coercion of the social institution of time into a pattern of self-coercion that encompasses the entire existence of the individual, is a graphic example of how the civilizing process contributes to model a social attitude that forms an integral part of the individual's personality structure.” Some lines of productive time (MARTINS, 2017) say,

\* Cleaning worker: “... when I'm up there, I can't be late, right. Therefore, it is always like that, I have to work a lot on time. Because if I'm late, five minutes to going to the kitchen, you know, it already hurts me a lot ...”

\* Personal department assistant: “... I prefer to work at lunchtime than to go home ... I always try to do everything at lunchtime or sometimes, right, we have lunch super-fast or change the working hours. Lunch ... if I need to stay for lunch all week for me to finish my job late, I will stay.... ”

\* Production worker: “... people already got that rhythm of working, you know. They already got that rhythm; so, I know I cannot really be late, I use my minutes only counted. So, ... that's all timed, it

is counted... if it is for me to go to the window, look if it is raining or if anything, the movement, I can't even. I can't! I really need to do everything "quickly"

\* A saleswoman says: "... when a person wears a watch, they become very much a slave to the watch, whether they like it or not, every time you are hitting their eyes on the watch ... give you one ... how do you say an anxiety of hurry, of running"

\* The operator says: "... we don't have much time to dedicate to us, right. Look, whoever works, I think he is a slave, a modern slave, because look, you dedicate the best years of your life working in a company ... I think that's it; the person lives a lot due to work, right and ends up not having time mainly to live. Unfortunately, it is like that, you can't escape this reality"

"By identifying and deconstructing ideological conversations about time in this way, ordinary text analysis can usefully be used in political debates about present and future social arrangements," Gough (1997: 234). On one hand, organizations' daily lives have shown that workers can challenge working time collectively and/or individually. On the other hand, new administrative managements have tried to avoid such "time killings."

If work can be organized more flexibly, it is because of eliminating "dead-time" and the insertion of this self-discipline in the worker's subjectivity. Solutions on how best to manage working time are indications that workers who choose and participate in their own working time decisions tend to increase tolerance for long hours and suffer less with such impositions. (HANCOCK & BLOCK, 2012).

"I think that you should use the time with what you like that life is short, make the most of time because it passes too quickly, you know. I think that life is too short, it's brief, right, it's a brief existence, we don't know in two minutes, there is a breakdown, and you die, something ... I think I had to enjoy the time with what I like, but not stop growing with culture, spiritually, professionally, enjoy it well," (MARTINS, 2017).

One certainty in this study – time can eliminate fears, explain bugs, talk about a thousand years, curtail the future, and produce new turns. Nevertheless, to make any of these possible first, we need to see ourselves as constructors of discursive practices and meanings created in our daily lives.

## **Conclusions**

Words as much as time-concepts do not need to have fixed, ready, predetermined, or eternal meanings. Therefore, discussing the complex network of uses, meanings, and values we created for both worlds. Understanding narratives and time leads us to reorganize our constructions. Thus, time and narratives can lead to building new discourses, meanings, practices. The potential that words have to invent realities is enormous. The same can be said about time. It may have the same value as dreams: walking through empty spaces, creating worlds, and multiplying realities. This way, there can be multiplicities in time, and not only linear-productive time.

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## A Consciousness Based Approach to Learn Tamil Language

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### Abstract

*Language learning based on a fixed set of grammar rules often leads to a rote learning and makes it a difficult task for the new language learners. A deeper understanding of the language anatomy starting from its alphabets is required to address the difficult questions of the significance behind the alphabets, its count, sequential order and structural forms. In this paper, we take a Consciousness based approach to Tamil language by exploring its language theory based on the ancient art of 'Consciousness manifesting matter' that signify the vowels and consonants. This theory is built on the principles of Truth and Consciousness leading to a grammar based on the perceivable senses of sound and vision. Connecting this language theory to modern linguistic science, we show how the principles of Truth and Consciousness are reflected in their sound spectra and the alphabetic structural features of the modern script. This results in an intuitive understanding of the language phonology and leads to a more natural way of learning Tamil language.*

### Introduction

Language grammar learning starts with a fixed set of rules that are generally accepted as the unquestionable tenets of the language. This approach to grammar learning without understanding the significances of rules often leads to rote learning, making it an uninteresting and difficult exercise for new language learners. Some fundamental questions that arise to the language learner's curious mind are: Why are there a fixed number of vowels and consonants arranged in a particular order? Why are there multiple similar sounding but different consonants? Why does the alphabets possess a structural form as they do? Are there any significances behind them? While some of these questions are being addressed by the modern linguistic research, the ancient linguistic sciences have much to offer.

Answering these fundamental questions require a language theory of some kind to make sense of the rules relative to its axioms. A language theory based on a deeper understanding of its anatomy in terms of alphabetic count, order and significance is essential. Fortunately, such a theory exists for the Tamil language, an ancient classical language among Greek, Latin, Sanskrit, Chinese and Arabic. It is a vibrantly living language widely spoken in south of India and one of the official languages of Singapore, Malaysia and Srilanka. It has a greater than 2000 years of history with a rich classical and spiritual literature. The metaphysical nature of the language can be perceived from the nomenclature of the classic Tamil grammar Tholkappiam (Tholkappiar), where the 12 vowels, 18 consonants and 216 compound vowels-consonants are called *Uyir*, *Mei*, *Uyir-Mei*, corresponding to Consciousness (soul, life), Truth(body) and Consciousness activating body. They build the foundation of a Consciousness based language theory and its learning.

### A Language Theory Based on Tamil's Significance

In Tamil language, the concept of vowels and consonants is not an accidental evolution of language theory but originates from a conscious organization of the principles of Truth and Consciousness by the ancient seers based on their experiences. The different principles of Truth and Consciousness (henceforth called T&C) form the fundamental tenets of Tamil language theory. Vallalar, the 19<sup>th</sup> century Saint Poet of Tamil Nadu in South India, defines Truth and Consciousness as follows: Truth is That expresses as all existence, Consciousness is That exists as expressing everything. Simply, Truth is all existence, that expresses as physical matter, life, mind and spirit. Consciousness is the self-aware force of existence that expresses everything, hence create the worlds (Sri Aurobindo, 2005). The T&C

expresses as Spirit in its highest existence and as inconscient matter in its lowest existence. The different states of Consciousness and the spirit manifesting matter or physical body are classified as the different vowels and consonants.

With the vowels and consonants forming the basic anatomy of language, the formation of words based on their combination is the next step followed by sentence formation based on subject, object and action. In the Tamil system, there is an ancient art of deriving the meaning of the word based on individual significances of the composing vowels and consonants and we call it the self-referential principle of word compositionality. But this art was lost over time, and it was rediscovered by Vallalar and revealed in the late 1850s when he explained the true significance of the word 'Tamil' during the clarification of some doubts in the Sanskrit Vedic text to the Kanchi Shankaracharya. With the vowels and consonants mapped to the different principles of T&C, he explained the meaning of Tamil = தமிழ் as the natural Truth experience of the soul involved and manifested in ignorant darkness (த) to evolve to its true being by the evolutionary force (மி) and further evolve to attain integral perfection and experience the Supreme-Perfection-Delight (ழ) (Vallalar, 1972, p.233; Rajesh, 2015). It is a meticulous choice and combination of the letters that lead to the meaning of Tamil = "Involution-Evolution-Perfection Delight", and it comprehends the entire system of vowels and consonants.

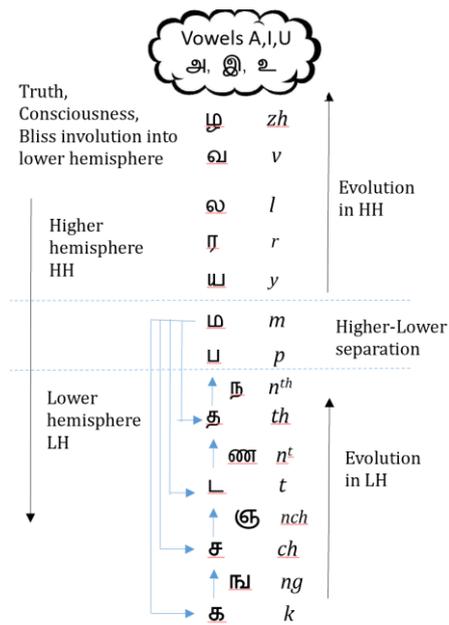
This significance of 'Tamil' explanation by Vallalar is of historical importance as it exposed the T&C framework in a precise and rigorous language. In another context, he exposed the existence of different types of grammar for the first alphabet 'A', raising 45 questions of grammar related to its history, outer form, inner form, essential nature, natural quality, subject, generality, specialty and artificialness (Vallalar, 1972, p.477). These two expositions lead us to a language theory with a greater grammar based on the principles of T&C and classifies the grammar of each alphabet broadly based on its Truth experience, Consciousness, innate quality, sound and structural form.

### **Language grammar Based on the Principles of Truth and Consciousness**

The greater grammar of Tamil language is essentially built on the principles of T&C and it maps the vowels and consonants as symbolic representations of these principles as shown in the Table.1. This theory classifies the vowels and consonants as two arts, *Chit-Kalai*: the art of Consciousness describing the principles of spirit and *Jada-Chit-Kalai*: the art of physical Consciousness describing the manifestation of physical body (Vallalar, 1972, p.233). The vowels signify three primary principles Truth/Existence, Consciousness, Delight and their combinations Conscious-Existence and Delightful-Existence mapped to the vowels A, I, U and E, O respectively. Essentially, they relate to the five functions of Truth and Consciousness namely: creation, life or preservation, dissolution, veiling-unveiling, uniting with Oneness.

The consonants signify the manifestation of spirit as physical body by a process of involution and the evolution of human being by a process of evolution. The triune principle of Truth-Consciousness-Delight is the Absolute One that becomes many true beings (souls) followed by descending and involving through the cosmic consciousness as individual beings (*jivas*) fallen into ignorance and taking birth in human physical body. At the conception of birth, the principles of spirit, mind and life are involved in the physical matter of embryo. This is followed by the inevitable process of evolution because what is involved is essentially a spirit with divine impulse towards perfection. It starts with the growth of physical body along with the gradual improvement of consciousness in terms of life, mind acquiring the instruments of cognition (life and sense organs) and thought (mind), followed by greater evolution in spirit (Sri Aurobindo, 2005).

**Figure 1:** Involution-Evolution-Bliss Framework.



**Table 1:** Significance of vowels and consonants

Vowels	Significance
A, அ	Truth/Existence
I, இ	Consciousness
U, உ	Delight/Bliss
E, எ	Conscious-Existence
O, ஒ	Delightful-Existence
<b>Consonants</b>	
zh, ழ	Supreme perfection delight
v, வ	All contained expressive power
l, ல	Descending state of v
r, ர்	True-self vibrant existence
y, ய	True-self expression
m, ம	Cosmic consciousness
p, ப	High-Low hemisphere separation
n <sup>th</sup> , ந்	Involved true-being/Jiva
th, த்	Mind
n <sup>t</sup> , ண	Evolution of life
t, ட்	Life
nch, ஞ்	Evolution of senses
ch, ச்	Physical senses
ng, ங்	Evolution of matter
k, க்	Physical matter/body

This involution is a two-stage process that creates the visible unconscious material universe from the super-conscious spirit, with the first in higher hemisphere, the second in lower hemisphere and the cosmic consciousness connecting them as shown in Fig.1. Correspondingly the evolution is also a double process in the lower and higher hemisphere, the evolution in ignorance where the human being evolves in physical, life and mental consciousness followed by a greater evolution in knowledge after being liberated from ignorance as a spiritual being to culminate in the integral perfection as supramental being. The cosmic consciousness also involved in all the lower planes (body, life and mind) dissolves the impurities and liberates the indwelling latent spirit as successive stages of higher consciousness evolving the involved ignorant being with separated individuality into a universal individual that identifies itself with the spirit, mind, life and body of all beings. This spiritual being further evolves consciously in knowledge to culminate as a supramental being to experience the integral perfection

delight and establishes a harmony of the higher and lower hemispheres (Sri Aurobindo, 2005, p.999). This whole process of evolution is comprehended by three stages as effectual(physical), effectual-causal(cosmic) and causal(spirit) resulting in a perfected triple body of pure physical, cosmic and causal states (*Suddha, Pranava, Gnana bodies*).

The whole process of involution and evolution is symbolized by the different consonants as shown in Fig.1. The consonants are classified into four types, hard (k, c, t, th, p), soft (ng, nch, n<sup>l</sup>, nt<sup>h</sup>, m), medial (y, r, l, v, zh) and the special (L, R, N). The involution in the higher hemisphere is mapped to the medial consonants (v to y), and in lower hemisphere to the hard consonants (th to k) with 'm' and 'p' connecting them. The double process of evolution starts in the lower hemisphere as evolution in ignorance (nk to n<sup>th</sup>) and completes in the higher hemisphere as progressive evolution in Knowledge (y to v) to culminate in the integral perfection delight 'zh'. The evolution in lower hemisphere is affected by the consonant 'm', that represents cosmic consciousness, by dissolving the ignorance/impurity at each plane of existence corresponding to physical body, senses, life and mind (k → ng, ch → nch, t → n<sup>l</sup>, th → n<sup>th</sup>) as shown in Fig.1. Hence, the hard and soft consonants are interleaved in their arrangement and follows this specific order reflecting the evolution in lower hemisphere. In the higher hemisphere the evolution starts with 'm' as the base and progresses as (y, r, l, v) to culminate in the supreme perfection delight state 'zh'. The 15 = 3x5 consonants form the full set signifying the involution-evolution-delight and the three special consonants (L, R, N) comprehend the entire set as transformed and perfected triple bodies of causal, effectual-causal and effectual states.

### Tamil Sound Grammar

The Tamil language theory extends itself to new forms of grammar based on the perceivable senses of sound and form. The origins of sound grammar can be traced back to the articulation rules of vowels and consonants dealt in the *Pirappiyal* section of Tamil grammar Tholkappiam (Murugan, 2000). In modern linguistics, phonetics is the branch that deals with physical aspects of sounds and speech spectral analysis plays an important role in acoustic phonetics. The speech spectra are characterized by formants, which are the peak concentration of energy at different frequencies of the produced sound based on resonances of the vocal tract. The first three formants (F1, F2, F3) of the spectra, are particularly important, the first is sensitive to the opening of mouth, second to shape of the body of tongue and third to the tip of tongue (Sundberg, 1977). The fundamental vowels A, I, U are called the open, close-front, close-back vowels (Ladefoged, 2012) and their characteristics are reflected in the F1, F2 formants of their spectra. The consonants are characterized by three fundamental classes: the stops, nasals and approximants. The stops are characterized by the place of articulation, as velar(k), palatal(ch), retroflex(t), alveolar(th), bilabial(p). The nasals correspond to the root nasal-sound(m) and the nasalization of the aforementioned stops by 'm' leading to (nk, nch, nt, nth). The approximants (y, r, l, v) composed of glides (y, v) and liquids (r, l) (Kenneth, 2000; Narayanan, 1999) tend towards vowel like characteristics, hence called semivowels.

Looking closely at the different sound spectra we can see interesting relations in terms of T&C principles. The 'A' sound is fundamental as it is produced by basic opening of the mouth and vibration of vocal folds. The primary vowels A, I, U are the fundamental sounds and the E(=I+A), O(=U+A) sound spectra reflect the combination of the primary sound spectra as shown in Fig.2. The consonant sound spectra show interesting correlations with lower hemisphere (LH) and higher hemisphere (HH) principles. The order of the consonant sounds shows a natural progression of the place of articulation from inner-most velar portion to the outer-most lips, marking the evolution of sounds in LH, as shown in Fig.4. Next, the nasal sound 'm' dissolves the hardness of the stop consonants by attenuating the second formant due to its antiresonance property in that region as shown in Fig.3. Hence, the place of articulation evolves progressively to the next level resulting in the interleaving order of hard and soft consonants as shown in Fig.4. This is followed by the semivowel sounds (y, r, l, v) in HH and are called the medial class *Idaiyinam*, as they mediate the hard-soft consonants to the actual vowels signifying a bridge between body-mind and the spirit. The semivowels 'y' and 'v' has similar spectral characteristics

as the vowels I and U, bridged by the sounds ‘r’ and ‘l’ as shown in Fig.3. This series is culminated by the sound ‘zh’ at the summit of higher hemisphere, which shows unique spectral characteristics of having 2<sup>nd</sup> formant in line with the hard consonants (specifically ‘th’) hence establishing a harmonic unity with the lower hemisphere and the 3<sup>rd</sup> formant moving towards 2<sup>nd</sup> formant due to retroflex movement. This sound ‘zh’ signifying supreme oneness delight tend towards a pure-whistle tone like spectral characteristic for whistled-zh around the 2<sup>nd</sup> formant as shown in Fig.3. Hence, the consonants taking a hierarchical order and getting organized into three groups exhibit evolutionary spectral characteristics and reflect the principles of T&C.

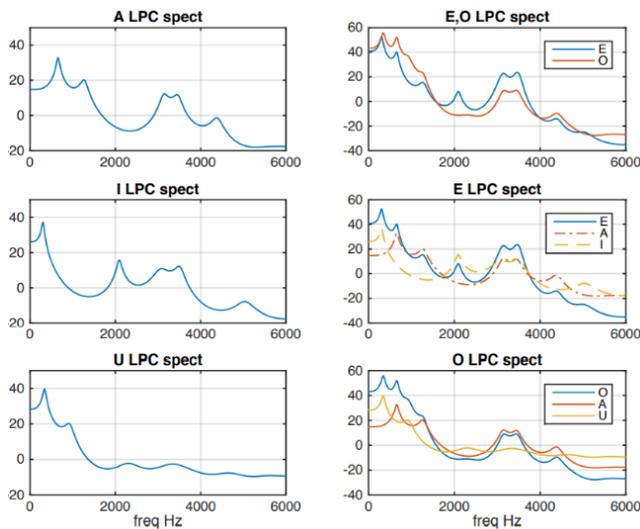


Figure 2: LPC Spectra of vowels

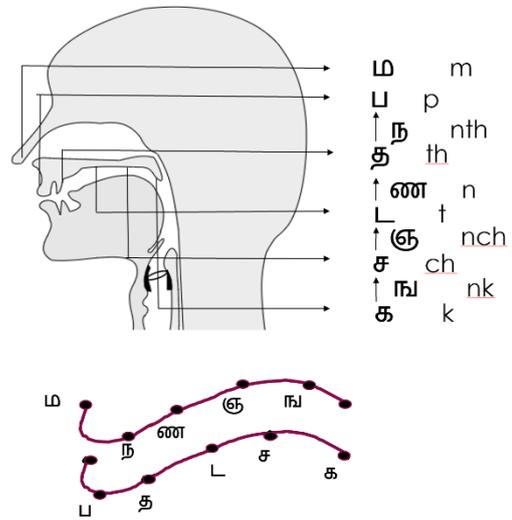


Figure 4: Place of articulation

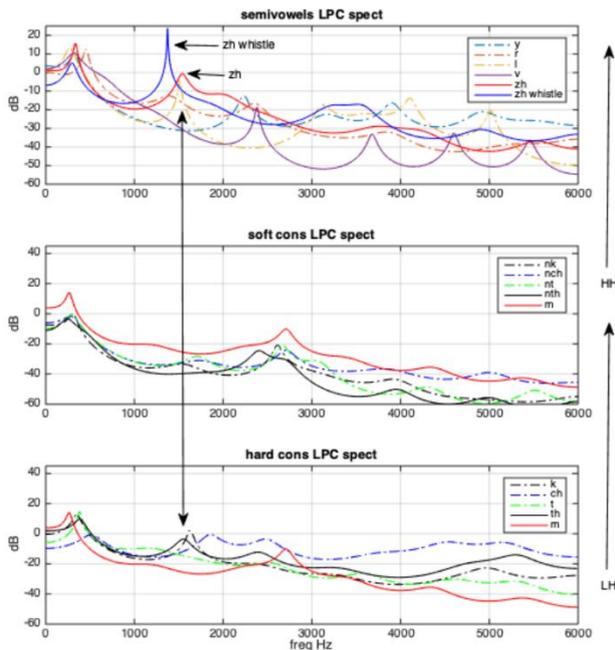


Figure 3: LPC Spectra of consonants

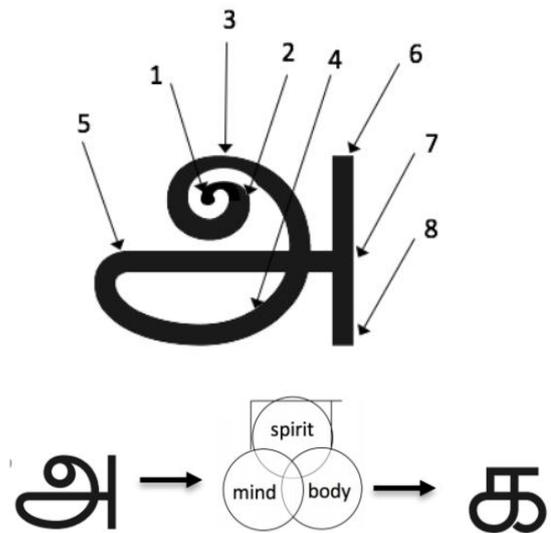


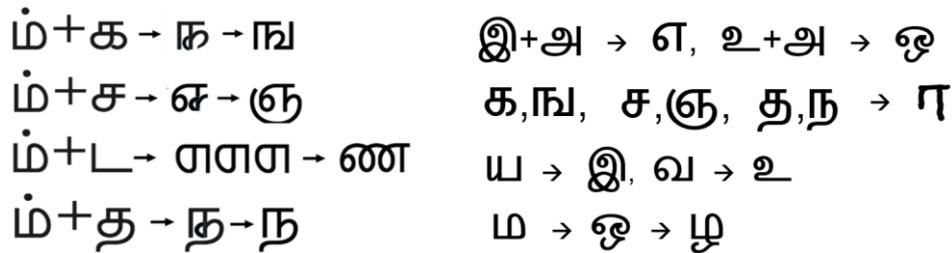
Figure 5: Akaram Form grammar

### Tamil Form Grammar

In contrast to the Tamil sounds, the script underwent a continuous evolution of more than 2000 years, from the ancient Brahmi script to the current form and well explored by archeological evidences

and epigraphy (Siromoney, 1982). This is only an external form evolution, but it is inherently driven by the principles of T&C and teleologically supported by the evolution of the writing medium from cave rocks, pottery, temple structures to printing press paper and computer digital displays. The existence of form grammar for the Tamil script came to light when Vallalar explained the structure of அ (Akaram), the first alphabet signifying Truth and manifestation, based on nine principles associated with the different stages of its form as shown in Fig.5 (Vallalar,1972, p.477; p.293; Rajesh, 2018, p.267). The nine stages: “1: involving in a dot, 2: descending and spiraling, 3: bursting-forth, 4: folding and rising up, 5: drawing back horizontally, 6: rising up vertically, 7: descending, 8: fixing downward, 9: taking complete form” corresponds to the spirit involving from higher hemisphere(stages 1 - 4) into the lower hemisphere of mind, life and body denoted by the dividing horizontal line for the mind(stage 5), rising vertical line for life (stage 6), fixing downward line for physical senses and body(stages 7,8) and completing form(stage 9). With ‘A’ as the root of all letters, it forms the basis of Tamil script’s structural form grammar.

All vowel forms start like ‘A’ and derive their structure based on the significance associated with them. The vowel ‘I’ இ signifying Consciousness inseparable from Truth as ‘One becoming many’ take a form similar to ‘A’ அ and encompassing the lowest inconscient to the highest super-conscient states. The vowel ‘U’ உ signifying Delight takes a contained form devoid of any dividing forms, vowel ‘E’ எ signifying conscious existence clear off the doubtful mind elements, vowel ‘O’ ஒ signifying delightful existence takes a contained form that unites the highest and lowest existence in oneness. Like the vowel ‘A’ அ, the first consonant ‘k’ க takes a closed-knotted form signifying the manifestation of physical body. The involution process of LH starts at the mid-plane of cosmic consciousness ‘m’ ம் by knotting the free form of ‘y’ ய் at the base of HH into LH. Then it gets inverted and knotted progressively in ‘th’ த், ‘ch’ ச் and completed in ‘k’ க் as rigid-knotted physical form locking the mind, life and senses. Next, the inverse structural form evolution of LH consonants can be seen as a progressive unknotting of closed-knotted forms to unknotted forms k → nk, ch → nch, th → n<sup>th</sup> (க → ங, ச → ஞ, த → ந) as shown in Fig.6 (consonant dots not shown).



**Figure 6:** Evolution of (k,c,t,th), vowels E,O, inherent kaal in (k,c,th), y(I) to v(U), m to zh

One general observation in the series is, the LH forms are knotted and closed on top (க, ங, ச, ஞ, த, ந) and the HH forms are free and open on top tending towards vowel forms (ய, ல, வ) as shown in Fig.6. Specifically, the inherent form of the LH consonants k,ch,th (க், ச், த்) is the involved true being of ‘Kaal’ (second letter of கா) acquiring the mind, physical sense and body forms. The mid-form in LH corresponds to life principle ‘t’ ட் showing the connection between spirit, mind and physical body by association of three knots ‘n<sup>th</sup>’ ண். The mid form of HH corresponds to vibrant existence of true being ‘r’ ர் like the pure Kaal form with extension. The ‘r’ ர் and ‘l’ ல் bridges the true self-expression ‘y’ ய் and the all contained expressive Consciousness ‘v’ வ், The final consonant ‘zh’ ழ stands above all as the culminating form, starting with ‘m’ ம் as the base and ending with ‘O’ ஒ as the uniting form to signify the supreme perfection delight of oneness. In summary, the

structural features of the vowels and consonants and their evolving order in the two hemispheres, reflect the significances of the principles of T&C (Rajesh, 2018, p.267).

## **Conclusions**

The Consciousness based approach is the most natural way to learn Tamil language because its theory is built on the principles of Truth and Consciousness mapped to the different vowels and consonants. The significance of 'Tamil' (Tha+mi+zh = Involution+Evolution+Delight) portrays a metaphysical language framework of how Consciousness manifests matter followed by a double evolution of human being to spiritual and supramental being. This framework leads to a greater grammar that translates the cognitive senses of sound and vision into a natural organization of phonetic and alphabetic structural grammars. Spectral analysis of the vowel and consonant sounds and the script structural feature analysis reflect the principles of Truth and Consciousness. This leads to an intuitive understanding of the language phonology in a new light and answers the usually forbidden questions of alphabetic count, sequential order and structural form. Hence, it transforms the fixed rule-based learning approach into a far more interesting consciousness-based approach that is reflective of our real-life cognitive experiences connecting the body, mind and spirit.

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