



കണ്ടൽച്ചെടി കഥ പറയുന്നു



കേരള ശാസ്ത്രസാഹിത്യ പരിഷത്ത്

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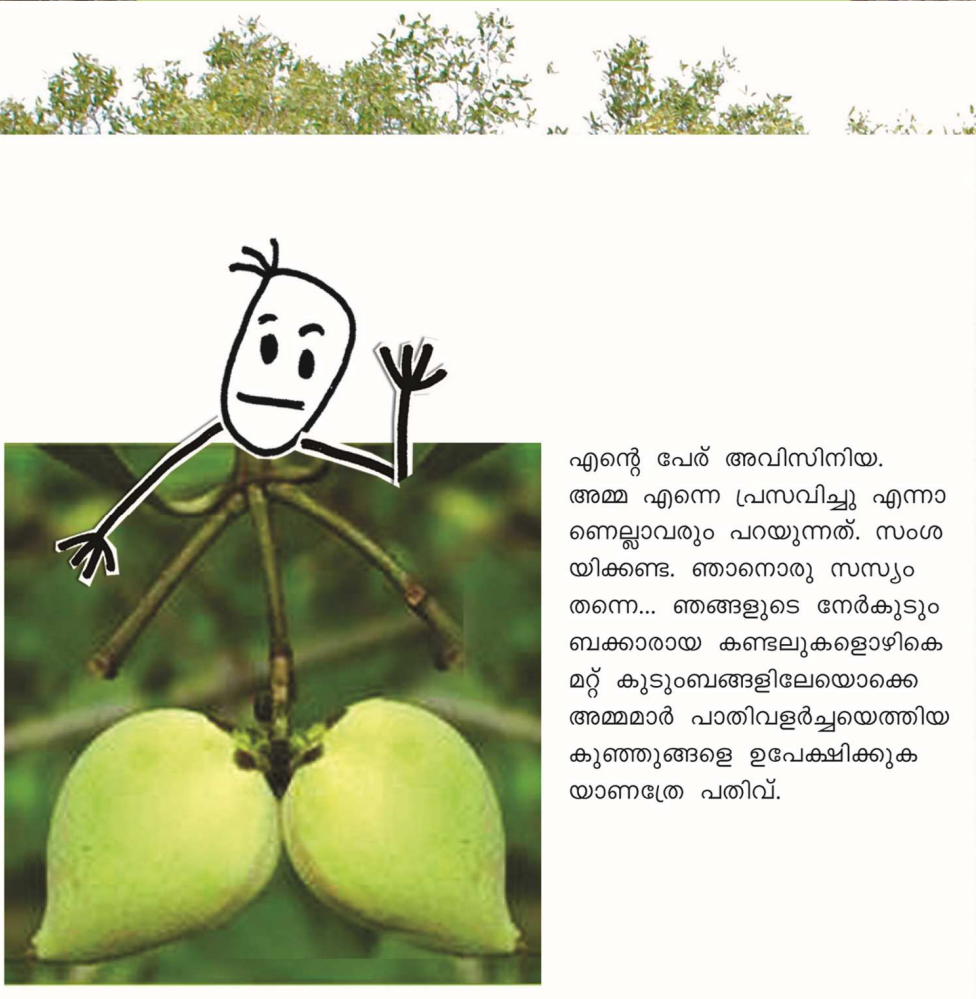
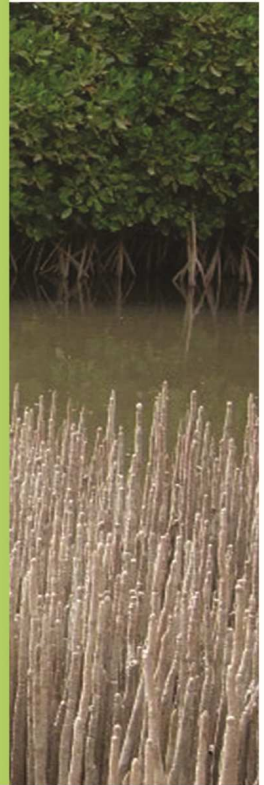
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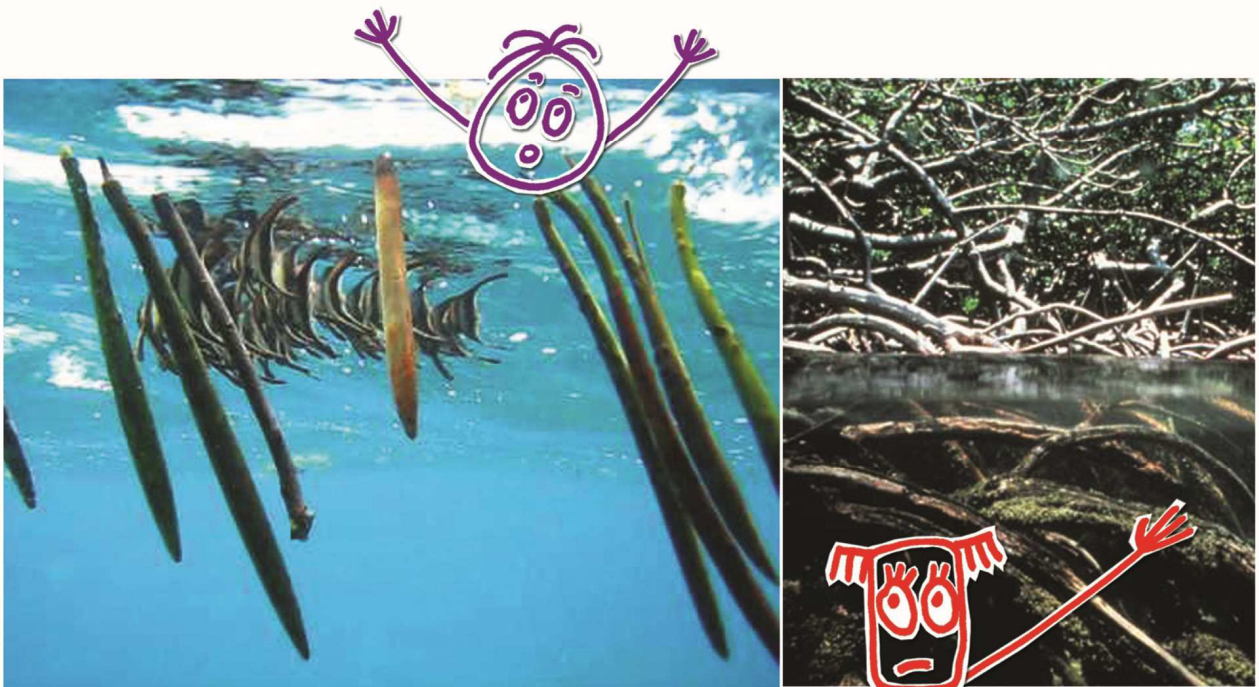
കേരള ശാസ്ത്രസാഹിത്യ പരിഷത്ത്



എന്റെ പേര് അവിസിനിയ.
അമ്മ എന്നെ പ്രസവിച്ചു എന്നാ
ണെല്ലാവരും പറയുന്നത്. സംശ
യിക്കണ്ട. ഞാനൊരു സസ്യം
തന്നെ... ഞങ്ങളുടെ നേർകൂടും
ബക്കാരായ കണ്ടലുകളൊഴികെ
മറ്റ് കൂടുംബങ്ങളിലേയൊക്കെ
അമ്മമാർ പാതിവളർച്ചയെത്തിയ
കുഞ്ഞുങ്ങളെ ഉപേക്ഷിക്കുക
യാണത്രേ പതിവ്.

പലരും താഴെ വീണുണങ്ങിയും പക്ഷികളും, അണ്ണാൻമാരും, കുരങ്ങു കളും തിന്നും ചത്തൊടുങ്ങുന്നു. ചിലർ അവരുടെ ദാക്ഷിണ്യത്തിൽ പലയിടങ്ങളിലും വളർന്നു വരും. ചിലർ അമ്മമാരുടെ കാൽച്ചുവട്ടിൽ തന്നെ തിങ്ങി വളരുന്നു.

എന്തായാലും ഞാൻ അമ്മയുടെ മാറുപറ്റി കുറേക്കാലം ജീവിച്ചു. എന്റെ വേരുകൾ വളർന്നു വലുതായിത്തുടങ്ങി. ഒടുവിൽ, മഴ തകർത്തുപെയ്ത ഒരു രാത്രിയിൽ എങ്ങനെയോ ഞാൻ അമ്മയിൽ നിന്നും വേർപെട്ടു. മഴവെള്ളത്തിൽ തെറിച്ച് ഞാൻ ജലോപരിതലത്തിലേക്ക് ഉയർന്നു നിൽക്കുന്ന അമ്മയുടെ ശ്വസനവേരുകൾക്കിടയിലേക്ക് വീണു.



കൂട്ടത്തിൽ എന്റെ കൂടപ്പിറപ്പുകളും. ശക്തനായിരുന്നിട്ടും വേർ കുന്തം പോലെ കുർത്തതായിരുന്നിട്ടും എന്തുകൊണ്ടോ എനിക്ക് താഴെ ചെളിക്കിടയിൽ ഉറച്ചു നിൽക്കാൻ കഴിഞ്ഞില്ല. അഴിമുഖത്ത് കിടന്ന എന്നെ പിടിച്ചുവലിക്കാൻ പുഴയും കടലും ഒരുപോലെ മത്സരിക്കുന്നുണ്ടോ! ചെളിയിൽ കാലുകളുറയ്ക്കാതെ ബുദ്ധിമുട്ടുന്ന എന്നെ നോക്കി കടൽ അട്ടഹസിക്കുകയാണ്. ഹോ! ഉപ്പുരസമാർന്ന ചെളിയിൽ എനിക്ക് ശ്വസിക്കാനാവുന്നില്ലല്ലോ. അയ്യോ... എന്നെ തിരമാലകൾ വന്നു മുട്ടുന്നു. വേലിയേറ്റമാണോ? ശ്വാസം മുട്ടുന്നതുപോലെ..!!



തിരകളുടെ തള്ളിച്ചയിൽ വേരുകളിടറി മണ്ണുമാറുന്ന വെള്ളം ഞാൻ ജലോപരിതലത്തിൽ ഒഴുകാൻ തുടങ്ങി. എത്ര ദൂരം ഒഴുകിയെന്നോർമ്മയില്ല. ഞാൻ അലയുക തന്നെയായിരുന്നു. വെള്ളമിറങ്ങിത്തുടങ്ങിയിരിക്കുന്നു... ക്ഷീണിച്ച് അവശനായിരുന്നെങ്കിലും വേരുകൾ ചെളിയിലുറപ്പിക്കുവാൻ നോക്കി. പല തവണ! പക്ഷേ സാധിക്കുന്നില്ല. തളർന്നുപോയതോടെ ആകാശം നോക്കി മലർന്നുകിടന്ന് പ്രാർത്ഥിക്കാൻ തുടങ്ങി. പിന്നീടപ്പോഴോ തിരകളുടെ ശക്തി കുറഞ്ഞു. ഇപ്പോൾ ഞാൻ ഏതോ ചെടിയുടെ ശ്വസനവേരുകൾക്കിടയിൽ കുടുങ്ങിക്കിടക്കുകയാണ്.

അമ്മേ... ഇതു കാണുന്നില്ലേ... ഈ തിരകൾ എന്നെ അമ്മാനമാട്ടുകയാണ്. കടൽ എത്ര കലിതുള്ളിയാലും അമ്മയ്ക്ക് ഒരു ഭയവുമുണ്ടായിരുന്നില്ലല്ലോ... തിരകളുമായി മല്ലടിച്ച് പതറാതെ നിന്നിട്ടില്ലേ... അങ്ങനെ ഈ തീരത്തെ സംരക്ഷിച്ചിട്ടില്ലേ... അമ്മയ്ക്കെങ്ങനെ ഇതൊക്കെ സാധിച്ചു? എനിക്ക് കാലുറപ്പിച്ച് ഒന്നു നിൽക്കാൻ പോലുമാവുന്നില്ലല്ലോ....

ശ്വസനവേരുകൾക്കിടയിൽ മത്സ്യക്കുഞ്ഞുങ്ങൾക്കും ചെമ്മീൻ കുഞ്ഞുങ്ങൾക്കും അഭയമേകുന്ന അമ്മ. വിവിധയിനം കക്കകൾക്ക് സ്വന്തം വേരിൻമേൽ വാസസ്ഥാനം നൽകുന്ന അമ്മ. നൂറുകണക്കിന് പക്ഷികൾക്കും വന്യാലുകൾക്കും കുരങ്ങൻമാർക്കും ശിവരങ്ങളിൽ അഭയമേകുന്ന അമ്മ. ഇവയ്ക്കെല്ലാം പ്രാണവായു നൽകുന്ന അമ്മ... അമ്മ എവിടെയാണാവോ..!?



ദാ, ഞാൻ എന്റെ കുഞ്ഞുവേരുകൾ ചെളിയിലേക്കമർത്തുകയാണ്. പുതിയ വേരുകൾ പൊടിച്ചു വരുന്നുണ്ട്. തിരമാലകളോട് പൊരുതി നിൽക്കാൻ എനിക്ക് കഴിയുന്നുണ്ട്. ഹായ് എന്റെ വേരുകളുറച്ചിരിക്കുന്നു!!
 ഹോ...! എങ്കിലും ഉപ്പ് വെള്ളത്തിന്റെയൊരു കയ്പ്... ചെളിയുടെ ദുർഗന്ധമാണെങ്കിൽ അതിലേറെ... എനിക്ക് സഹിക്കാനാവുന്നില്ല. ജീവിതം ദുസ്സഹമായതുപോലെ. എന്റെ കുഞ്ഞുവേരുകൾ കൊണ്ട് ശ്വാസമെടുക്കാൻ കഴിയുന്നില്ല.
 വെറുതേയല്ല അമ്മ ശ്വാസനവേരുകൾ ജലോപരിതലത്തിലേക്ക് നീട്ടിയിരുന്നത്. എനിക്കും അത്തരം വേരുകൾ വേണം. എന്റെ ചില വേരുകൾ മേലോട്ടുയരാൻ തുടങ്ങി. അവയിൽ ധാരാളം സുഷിരങ്ങളുണ്ടായിരുന്നു. അങ്ങനെ സാവധാനം എനിക്ക് പ്രാണവായു ലഭിച്ചു തുടങ്ങി.



ഉപ്പുവെള്ളത്തിലാണ് ഇപ്പോൾ കിടത്തം. അപ്പോൾ പിന്നെ അത് കുടിക്കുകയല്ലാതെ വേറെ മാർഗ്ഗമില്ലല്ലോ. പിന്നെ, എന്നോടൊപ്പം ഒഴുകിവന്ന പല കായ്കളും കുഞ്ഞുചെടികളും ഉപ്പുവെള്ളത്തിൽ കിടന്നു ചത്തു ചീഞ്ഞു. ഈ ഉപ്പുവെള്ളം കുടിച്ചതുകൊണ്ടാണ് എനിക്ക് ജീവൻ നിലനിർത്താനായത്. എന്നാൽ ഉപ്പ് അമിതമായാലും വയ്യ. അങ്ങനെ ആവശ്യത്തിൽ കുടുതലുള്ള ഉപ്പ് വിസർജ്ജിക്കാനുള്ള ഉപ്പുഗ്രന്ഥികളും എന്നിലുണ്ടായി. ഇലകളിലൂടെ ഞാൻ ഉപ്പിനെ പുറന്തള്ളി. മനുഷ്യർ അതുകണ്ടിട്ടുണ്ടാവും. അതല്ലേ അവർ എന്നെ 'ഉപ്പട്ടി' എന്ന് വിളിയ്ക്കുന്നത്! അമ്മയുടെ പേരുതന്നെ... എന്നെ എല്ലാവരും തിരിച്ചറിയുന്നുണ്ടല്ലോ. എനിക്ക് സന്തോഷമായി.

എത്ര ദിവസങ്ങൾ അങ്ങനെ കിടന്നെന്നറിയില്ല. പടിഞ്ഞാറ് കാർമേഘങ്ങൾ ഉരുണ്ടു കൂടി. മഴ ആർത്തുപെയ്യുകയാണ്. കാലവർഷമായിരിക്കുന്നു. അപ്പോൾ ഞാനിവിടെ എത്തിയിട്ട് ഒരു വർഷം കഴിഞ്ഞു. എനിക്കിപ്പോൾ രണ്ടടിയിലേറെ പൊക്കമുണ്ട്. മാറിമാറി വരുന്ന സാഹചര്യങ്ങളിൽ എങ്ങനെ പെരുമാറണമെന്ന് ഞാൻ പഠിച്ചു കഴിഞ്ഞു. മഴക്കാലത്ത് പുഴയിലൂടെ ഒഴുകിവരുന്ന എക്കൽമണ്ണിനെ വേരുകൾ കൊണ്ട് മുറുകെ പിടിച്ചു നിർത്താൻ എനിക്കാവുന്നുണ്ട്.

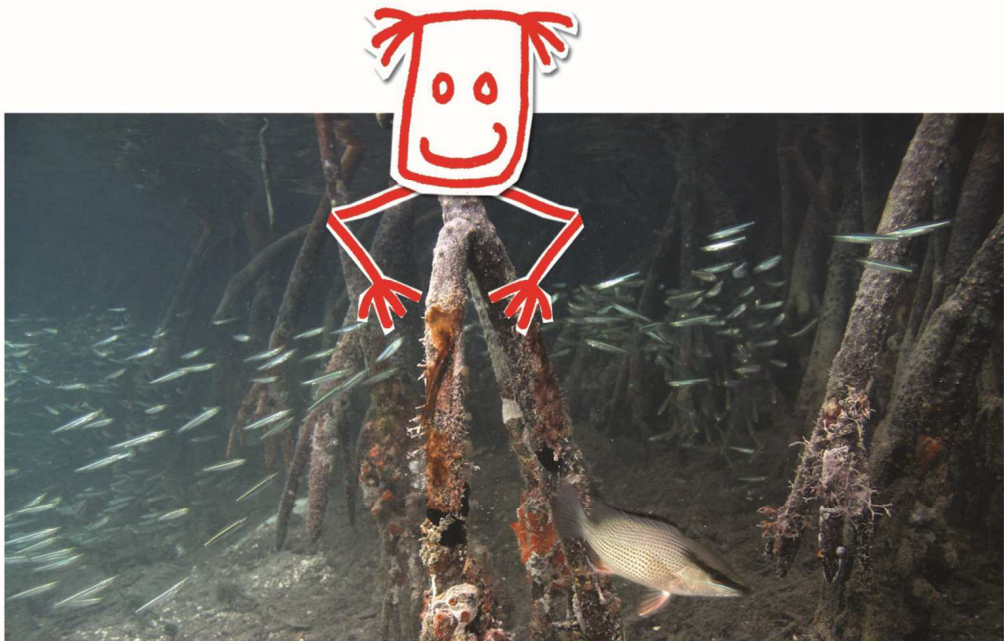


പുഴയിൽ വീണ്ടും വെള്ളമുയരുകയാണ്. ഇതാ എന്റെ ശരീരത്തിന്റെ പകുതിയിലധികം വെള്ളത്തിനടിയിലായി. ഇനി കുറേമാസങ്ങൾ ഇതായിരിക്കും അവസ്ഥ. വേലിയേറ്റസമയത്ത് പലപ്പോഴും ഞാൻ മുഴുവനായി മുങ്ങിപ്പോകാറുണ്ട്. ഇലകൾ ചിലത് ചീഞ്ഞെങ്കിലും അനുഭവങ്ങളിലൂടെ ഞാൻ പലതും മനസ്സിലാക്കിയിട്ടുണ്ട്. കൂടുതൽ കരുത്താർജ്ജിക്കുകയും ചെയ്തിട്ടുണ്ട്. അമ്മയും ഇങ്ങനെ ഒരുപാട് അനുഭവങ്ങളിലൂടെ കടന്നു വന്നതാണെന്ന് പറഞ്ഞുകേട്ടിരുന്നു.



മഴ സാവധാനം കുറയുകയാണ്. മഴക്കാലം വസന്തത്തിന് വഴിമാറിത്തുടങ്ങി. ചെടികൾ പൂത്തു. പൂമ്പാറ്റകളും തേനീച്ചകളും വണ്ടുകളും അവരുടെ ഇടയിൽ മുളിപ്പുന്നു നടന്നു. എങ്ങും സുഗന്ധം!!

പുഴ ഒഴുകിക്കൊണ്ടു വന്ന എക്കലിലെ ഭക്ഷണം തേടി വലിയ മത്സ്യങ്ങൾ വന്നു തുടങ്ങി. അവരിൽ പലരും മുട്ടയിടാനായി എന്റെ വേരുകൾ തേടിയെത്തി. മുട്ടകൾ വിരിഞ്ഞ് ലക്ഷക്കണക്കിന് കുഞ്ഞുങ്ങളാണുണ്ടായത്. എന്റെ വേരുകൾക്കിടയിൽ ഒളിച്ചുകളിക്കുന്ന മത്സ്യക്കുഞ്ഞുങ്ങളെ കാണുമ്പോൾ ഞാനുമെന്റെ കുട്ടിക്കാലം ഓർക്കും. അമ്മയെ ഓർക്കും. അല്ലാ... ആരൊക്കെയോ കൂട്ടത്തോടെ വരുന്നുണ്ടല്ലോ... ഓ... ചെമ്മീനുകൾ... ഇനി പറയണ്ട... ആകെ ബഹളം തന്നെയൊ...



പുഴയിൽ വെള്ളം കുറയുകയാണ്. കൊക്കുകളും മറ്റു പക്ഷികളും മത്സ്യക്കുഞ്ഞുങ്ങളെ പിടിക്കാൻ വരുന്നുണ്ട്. ഓ.. ദേശാടനക്കിളികളും വിരുന്നു വന്നിരിക്കുന്നു. വേലിയിറക്കസമയത്ത് ചെളി കിടയിൽ സുലഭമായി കാണുന്ന കീടങ്ങളും പുഴുക്കളും ഞണ്ടുകളും ആണ് അവയുടെ പ്രധാന ആഹാരം. മത്സ്യക്കുഞ്ഞുങ്ങളെ അന്വേഷിച്ചു നടക്കുന്നവരും കുറവല്ല. എന്റെ ദേഹത്ത് നിന്നു കൊഴിഞ്ഞുവീണ ഇലകളെടുത്ത് ഞണ്ടുകൾ ഓടുകയാണ്. അവർ ഇലകൾ കഷ്ണങ്ങളായി മുറിച്ച് ആഹാരത്തിനായി മാളങ്ങളിലൊളിപ്പിക്കുന്നു.



എനിക്കിപ്പോൾ ഒരു മീറ്ററിലേറെ നീളമുണ്ട് കേട്ടോ... സാമാന്യം നല്ല തടിയും.

അതുകൊണ്ടുതന്നെ ഇപ്പോഴെനിക്ക് ഒരുപാട് കൂട്ടുകാരുമുണ്ട്. പക്ഷികൾ, കക്കുകൾ, എരുന്തുകൾ... അങ്ങനെ ഒട്ടേറെ പേർ. പക്ഷേ, എന്റെ കൺ മൂന്നിൽ നിന്ന് എരുന്തുകളെയും കക്കുകളെയും മനുഷ്യർ പിടിച്ചു കൊണ്ടു പോകും. മനുഷ്യരെ പേടിച്ച് ഇവരിൽ പലരും എന്റെ വേരിനടിയിലേക്ക് നുഴഞ്ഞു കയറിയിട്ടുണ്ട്. പിടിക്കപ്പെട്ടാലോ... നെഞ്ച് വെട്ടിപ്പൊളിച്ചും തിളച്ച വെള്ളത്തിലിട്ടും അവയെ കൊല്ലുമത്രേ..



എന്റെ ഇലകൾ വിഘടിച്ച് കുഞ്ഞുപുഴുക്കൾക്കും മറ്റു ചെറിയ ജീവികൾക്കും ആഹാരമാകുന്നത് ഞാൻ കാണുന്നുണ്ട്. ഈ കുഞ്ഞുജീവികളാകട്ടെ മത്സ്യങ്ങൾക്കും ചെമ്മീനുകൾക്കും തെണ്ടുകൾക്കും പക്ഷികൾക്കും ആഹാരമാകുന്നു. ഇവരെ തിന്നാൻ വലിയ പരുന്തുകളും പ്രാപ്പിടിയൻമാരും മുങ്ങകളുമാണ് വരുന്നത്. അപ്പോൾ, പ്രകൃതി തീർത്ത ജീവന്റെ ജാലികയിലെ പ്രധാനപ്പെട്ട ഒരു കണ്ണിയാണ് ഞാൻ.

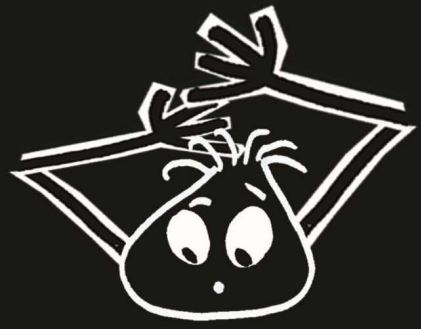
ഇന്നെന്റെ ചില്ലുകളിൽ ധാരാളം പക്ഷികൾ വന്നിരിക്കാറുണ്ട്. വേരുകളിൽ കക്കാവർഗ്ഗത്തിൽപ്പെട്ട ഒരുപാട് ജീവികൾ ഒട്ടിപ്പിടിച്ചു വളരുന്നു. അഴിമുഖത്തെത്തിച്ചേരുന്ന പുഴയിലെ മാലിന്യത്തെ നിർവ്വീര്യമാക്കുന്നതിൽ ഇവർക്ക് കാര്യമായ പങ്കുണ്ടെന്ന് എനിക്കറിയാം.

ഞാൻ കാണുന്നുണ്ട്, എന്റെ ജീവിതവും എനിക്കു ചുറ്റുമുള്ള ജീവിതവും. എന്റെ ദേഹത്തു നിന്നും കൊഴിഞ്ഞു വീഴുന്ന ഇലകൾ പോലും പാഴായിപ്പോകുന്നില്ല. അഴുകിയ ഇലകൾക്ക് ചുറ്റും തിങ്ങിക്കൂടുന്ന എത്രയെത്ര കുഞ്ഞുജീവികളാണ് എനിക്കു ചുറ്റുമുള്ളത്. പിന്നെ, ഇവരെത്തന്നെ ഉറ്റുനോക്കുന്ന മത്സ്യങ്ങൾ, ചെമ്മീനുകൾ, പക്ഷികൾ... ഇക്കൂട്ടരെ പിടിക്കാൻ വരുന്ന പരുന്തുകൾ, പ്രാപ്പിടിയന്മാർ... അതെ... എനിക്കു വിശ്വസിക്കാനാവുന്നില്ല. പ്രകൃതി തീർത്ത ജീവന്റെ ജാലികയിലെ പ്രധാനപ്പെട്ട ഒരു കണ്ണിയാണ് ഞാൻ. എന്റെ ജീവിതം ധന്യമായി.



കുറേ ദിവസങ്ങളായി. ദൂരെയെവിടെയോ നിന്ന് ഭയങ്കരമായ ശബ്ദം കേൾക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. പുഴ ചുവന്ന് കലങ്ങിയൊഴുകുന്നു. എവിടെയോ നിർമ്മാണപ്രവർത്തനങ്ങൾ നടക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. ചെടിക്കമ്പുകളും ഇലകളും ഒഴുകിവരാൻ തുടങ്ങി. കണ്ടലുകൾ വെട്ടുകയാണ്. കൂടുകളും കുഞ്ഞുങ്ങളും നഷ്ടപ്പെട്ട പക്ഷികളുടെ ആർത്തനാദങ്ങൾ കേൾക്കുന്നു. ദൈവമേ, എന്റെ അമ്മ. കുറേ പക്ഷികൾ പറന്നുവരുന്നുണ്ട്...





പുഴയിൽ അതിഭീകരമായ തോതിൽ കയ്യേറ്റം നടക്കുന്നുണ്ടത്രെ. കണ്ടൽച്ചെടികൾ വ്യാപകമായി വെട്ടി നശിപ്പിക്കുകയാണത്രെ... ലോറിയിൽ മണ്ണും കല്ലും കൊണ്ടിറക്കുന്നുണ്ടത്രെ... പക്ഷികൾ പറഞ്ഞറിഞ്ഞു. ധാരാളം ജീവികൾക്ക് കുടുകളും കുഞ്ഞുങ്ങളും നഷ്ടപ്പെട്ടത്രെ...!





അയ്യോ... ഒടുവിൽ, ഞാൻ ഭയപ്പെട്ടതു തന്നെ സംഭവിച്ചു. ഇതാ ഈ കിടക്കുന്നത്... എന്റെ ശ്വസനവേരുകൾക്കിടയിൽ ഉടക്കിക്കിടക്കുന്നത്, എന്റെ അമ്മയുടെ ശരീരഭാഗങ്ങളാണ്. എന്റെ പാവം അമ്മ! പുഴയുടെ ഭാഗമായി അമ്മ ഒഴുകിയകലുന്നത് നോക്കിനിൽക്കാനേ എനിക്ക് കഴിഞ്ഞുള്ളൂ. നെഞ്ച് പൊട്ടുന്നതു പോലെ.

എന്റെ ആസൂത്രണങ്ങളിലൂടെ നീർ പൊടിഞ്ഞു. അവ ഇലകളിൽ പടർന്ന് കണ്ണീരായി ഒഴുകാൻ തുടങ്ങി.

എന്റെ ഉള്ളിലിപ്പോൾ ഒരുപാട് ചോദ്യങ്ങളുയരുകയാണ്.... ഉത്തരം കിട്ടാത്ത കുറേ ചോദ്യങ്ങൾ. ലക്ഷോപലക്ഷം ജീവികൾക്ക് ആഹാരം നൽകിയവരാണ് ഞങ്ങൾ. അവർക്ക് ബാല്യകാലത്ത് സംരക്ഷണമേകിയവരാണ് !. അഭയാർത്ഥരായ പക്ഷി ജന്തുജാലങ്ങൾക്ക് ശിവരങ്ങളിലും വേരുകൾക്കിടയിലും ശരണമേകിയവരാണ്...



മനുഷ്യൻ സ്വന്തമെന്ന് അവകാശപ്പെടുന്ന തീരത്തെ കലിതുളളിവരുന്ന തിരകളിൽ നിന്നും സംരക്ഷിച്ചത് ഞങ്ങളാണ്. സർവ്വോപരി മനുഷ്യന്മാരുടെ എല്ലാ ജീവജാലങ്ങൾക്കും പ്രാണവായു നൽകുന്നത് ഞങ്ങളും കൂടിയാണ്. ഞങ്ങളെ നശിപ്പിച്ചാൽ അവനെന്ത് ലാഭം? അവന്റെ നാശം തന്നെയല്ലേ ഇതുവഴി കുറിക്കപ്പെടുന്നത്...!!



കുട്ടികൾക്ക്
വായിച്ചുരസിക്കാൻ
കണ്ടുരസിക്കാൻ
ഓർത്തുരസിക്കാൻ

'പുസ്തകപ്പുരയ്ക്ക് ശേഷം'

അറവീട്

8 - 10 വയസ്സുവരെയുള്ള കുട്ടികൾക്ക് 13 പുസ്തകങ്ങൾ

കുട്ടികളുടെ ഭാവനയെയും സർഗ്ഗശേഷിയെയും ഉണർത്തുന്ന പുസ്തകങ്ങളാണിവ. ഭാഷാപരമായും സാഹിത്യപരമായും മികവേറിയ രചനകൾ. രചനകളെ വേറിട്ട് ആസ്വാദനതലത്തിലേക്ക് ഉയർത്തുന്ന വർണ ചിത്രങ്ങൾ. ഈ പുസ്തകങ്ങൾ പ്രായഭേദമന്യേ എല്ലാവർക്കും ഇഷ്ടമാവുമെന്നതിൽ സംശയമില്ല. ബാലസാഹിത്യം അതിരുകൾക്കുള്ളിൽ തെറുക്കപ്പെടേണ്ടതല്ലല്ലോ!

രചന: ഡോ. കിഷോർ കുമാർ കെ



സമ്പൂർണ്ണതയിൽ ഗവേഷണമുൾപ്പെടെ കേരളത്തിലെ വനം-പരിസ്ഥിതി മേഖലകളിൽ നിരവധി പഠനങ്ങൾക്ക് നേതൃത്വം നൽകിയ ഗവേഷകൻ. കോളേജ് അധ്യാപകൻ. യൂണിക്സ് പ്രോഗ്രാമിംഗ് പരിസ്ഥിതി അംഗം.

അധ്യാപകൻ, ചിത്രകാരൻ. കുട്ടികൾക്കു വേണ്ടിയുള്ള പുസ്തകങ്ങൾക്കും ആനുകാലികങ്ങളിലും ചിത്രീകരണം നിർവഹിച്ചുവരുന്നു.

കൊളാഷ് പ്രശാന്ത് കൊറോട്ട്

കേരള സാസ്ത്രസാഹിത്യ പരിഷത്ത്

വില: ₹ 45

കണ്ടൽച്ചെടികൾ ചതുപ്പുകളിൽ നിന്ന് മുകളിലേക്ക് ശ്വസനവേരുകൾ ഉയർത്തി അവിടം കാടുപിടിപ്പിക്കുകയല്ല... ഇതിന് പിന്നിൽ പരിസ്ഥിതിസന്തുലനത്തിന്റെ കഥയുണ്ട്.

കണ്ടൽച്ചെടി കഥ പറയുന്നു



NATIVE MEDIA IN INDIA
COMMON COURSE
IN ENGLISH

III SEMESTER

(CU CBCSS)
(2014 ADMISSION ONWARDS)



UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT

SCHOOL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

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UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT
SCHOOL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION
STUDY MATERIAL
III SEMESTER
COMMON COURSE IN ENGLISH
NATIVE MEDIA IN ENGLISH

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MODULE I

1. CONVERGENCE OF MEDIA MODULE 1

The nineteenth century England witnessed the industrial revolution, characterized by massive streamlined production. Even in those times, the print, visual and cyber media existed independently. But in today's world, everything is going digital and there is a visible convergence of all these media.

What is convergence?

Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) defines convergence in the simplest manner using three circles. The first one represents print media which includes books, newspapers and journals. The second circle includes the visual media which encompasses films, documentaries and the likewise. Internet and cyber media are the components of the third circle. According to MIT, these three circles existed distinctly earlier. But now the three circles overlap- they come together and the current situation is one where they cannot exist independently. The writer of this piece, Sashi Kumar uses an example from his experience to delineate this convergence. At Asian School of Journalism, he asked a fresh batch of 200 students that how many of them read newspapers. On hearing this question only four hands shot up in the air. Though the initial thought about it was shocking, on second thoughts he came to an understanding that the romantic idea of sipping the morning tea and reading the newspaper is of the bygone era. However he says that this experiment does not mean that the present generation is ignorant. They are connected to the vast arena of information through internet. They would know about the issue and all the possible interpretation on it and around it. He uses the example of hyperlink, where one can navigate from one news to another by a single click or touch. Thus the mobile or the tablet or the computer screen converges newspaper, radio, television and internet.

Problem Area:

When one especially looks at the situation India is in, there is a major problem in achieving a complete convergence in India. India is the second largest populous country where rural and urban divide is enormous. The urban population is highly privileged as far as digital penetration is concerned. Nevertheless mobile phones especially are sinking into rural areas. When the most ordinary persons have access to mobile phones and other gadgets, it empowers them. We are aware of the new mission by our government called "Digital India". This is also for attaining the same goal of convergence in the rural area.

Social media:

In contrast to the formal media, social media though informal is dynamic and fast changing and has much impact on today's society. All the discussions and issues are taking place in the social media which even led to the uprisings for democracy in Tunisia, Egypt and other countries. In the recently constituted 16th Lok Sabha election also, we see the thorough campaigning for the party and canvassing for vote through Facebook, Twitter and Whatsapp.

Social media versus formal media

Sashi Kumar prefer social media to formal media due to its dynamic nature. He also says that formal media will have a lot of agendas. For example formal media might only celebrate the achievements of a certain political party and constantly criticizes the other party. Social media does not have such polarizing tendencies and offers a platform that's is democratic, where everyone's voice is registered. In addition to that mass movements like Occupy Wall Street happened only due to the existence of social media. The emergence of an alternate party like AAP also owes it to social media. It attracts the ordinary people and helps them to build tempo. Otherwise in a heavily competitive world, it would be so hard to emerge as the ruling party with comparatively meagre funding.

Oral and Literary Media

It is impossible that one should be literate to use social media. He takes up the example of Kerala where we are close to 100% literate. However he stresses on the fact that oral tradition has a greater base than written tradition in general. He takes the example of television, where one does not need to be literate to attain information from TV. In social media also there is video streaming where information can be attained using videos. Thus he gives more weight to oral tradition. He even takes an example from Greek mythology. When the Greek God Hermes invented writing, the Egyptian ruler Thoth commented that even though it is a wonderful invention, memory would become more and more redundant. He does not totally undermine writing. He agrees with the contribution of writing to modernism and the glorification of human beings. But writing denotes absence, he says. One does not need to write to a person who is beside him/her. Speech and hearing when imply presence, and writing is for the absent person.

Oral tradition and Convergence

Oral tradition is being molded in such ways that they occupy a part of convergent technology in media. However oral tradition is not being seen in the same degree in every media. It is prevalent in social or the informal media. But it has not been seen widely in formal media. However, we are living in a time of convergence taking place at a much faster rate. Sashi Kumar says that the say is not distant where media would rule the converging world. It would be the place of the common people. He also acknowledges people who are allergic to social media and have not joined it. However, even they are caught up in the grand plan of convergence – a web that knits the whole world across the seas.

Questions

1. **What is media convergence?**
2. **Differentiate between oral and literary tradition**
3. **What did Thoth comment on the invention of memory?**

2. YOUNG INDIANS HAVE BECOME MORE SUPERSTITIOUS

This is an interview with an eminent cosmologist Jayant Vishnu Narlikar, who along with his mentor developed the conformal gravity theory. He talks in this interview about the increasing superstition the new generation is holding on to. Firstly, he responds to question on the attitude of Indians towards science. According to him this could be divided into two: scientific research and scientific temper. He quotes Jawaharlal Nehru, who had reiterated in his *Discovery of India* that Indians should scientifically align themselves. Unfortunately, that has not materialized even after 6 decades of India's independence. He contrasts this to the increase in superstitious beliefs especially among the urban folk. They proudly display their brand new smart phones and other gadgets but simultaneously indulge in the euphoria that god-men are creating.

Education has become more inclusive, but the quality has taken a steep. There are countless students in each class and it is very hard for the teachers to talk something outside the syllabus which might distract the decorum of the class, and it is painstaking to bring it to normal owing to the sheer number. The students are also overburdened with syllabus, the TV shows, computer games and social media. They do not have time for recluse or self-introspection. They are just crammed with a lot of information that they cannot comprehend analyze. In addition to that, on the government's side, the budget allocation for Research and Development (R & D) in a science and technology has decreases and is a measly 0.8 percent. It is imperative that the government allocate greater funds to the scientists, else India would always lag behind in original scientific research.

Talking about the media, it is disturbing that when a solar eclipse occurs, it has animated panel discussions on it by calling an astrologer and a scientist! That is the irony of the situation. Most of the media houses have their in house astrologers. In a survey it was found out that the vernacular newspapers reserve more space for science related news than the English language dailies. The ones who read the English dailies, who usually hail from upper class societies are indeed the most disinterested in scientific news and are apparently more superstitious than the grass root people. India has many space age superstitions still prevalent like the Bermuda triangle and flying saucers which were demystified long ago but has not infiltrated the Indian psyche. Indians are always lovers of fables and fantasies, but such tales with no scientific basis is detrimental to the youth and is against the Fundamental Duty envisaged in our constitution which is to develop a scientific temper. He also talks about E.M Forster and the close friendship they had while in Cambridge. He was 28 then and Forster 80. Narlikar says he had a bell connected from Forster's room which Forster rang at any time of health emergency. Though they were from two different generations, they bonded very well and Narlikar considers him as one of his greatest inspirations.

Answering the question of the comet Swift Tuttle hitting the earth in 2126, Narlikar replies that it can be reverted by using a nuclear device which will deflect the comet. However, he said that he was more interested to see the way people would respond to it. When the superstitious world took its conventional way, the scientific world was quick in talking about the methodologies to avert the danger.

Questions

- 1. How has media amplified superstitions?**
- 2. Comment on Narlikar's relationship with Forster.**

3. INDIA DID NOT GET ANYTHING WRONG

This is an interview with the world's richest person and Microsoft ex-CEO Bill Gates who is currently steering a huge philanthropic movement under the name Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Like his earlier times on business he is shuttling from one country to another with a busy schedule. However, the purpose is different. Earlier, he wanted to sell his product but now he is extending his hands to the deprived and the underprivileged. He contrasts his earlier visits to India saying that it only shows the rosy side of the country and he would not have delved into Bihar or would have understood the plight of the poor in the cities. He talks about the complacent attitude of the rich in India but do not acutely complain them for it. He says that it is the same in any plush locality all over the world that they do not have a clear picture about the poverty and hardships of the majority. Only if people voluntarily step out from their comfort zones, they could realize the turmoil of the vulnerable.

Earlier at Microsoft, there was this brimming energy about the American dream on software. Bill Gates is not reducing it into nothing. Nevertheless the monetary discussions now is much simpler since he is not asking money from anyone, he wittily remarks. He does not downsize his Microsoft job and passionately speaks about it as the best job he could have in his 20s and 30s. But now with his partner and wife Melinda, he is of the opinion that in his 40s, this is the best job he can do.

To the question that is people would be afraid of the foundation like they were of Microsoft due to its sheer vastness, Gates retorts saying that Microsoft just sold products in a highly competitive industry. Apple and Google and others are its huge contenders. He does not understand the fear factor. Switching on to his foundation he says that it is imperative that more and more people come to the forefront to allay poverty and sickness. He also had congratulatory words for India's growing health sector and also added that the government should not shy away from contributing to research and development in communicable diseases which mostly hit the poor who cannot afford exorbitant out of the pocket spending. He also suggests that schemes like NRHM, which has a huge workforce should be adequately skilled and the scale of measurement of parameters of health should be conducive to the local health environment.

He also takes a jibe against the cynical attitude of the people that the government is indulging in excessive pilferage. The people should be proactive about the schemes and policies of the government. Simultaneously the government should also be upkeep and improvise on its strategies. On the question why he chose to concentrate more on HIV than TB, he responds that TB is more entangled in the Indian society and is manifested at different levels. But AIDS is more lethal and there are chances of a slow epidemic of AIDS which was seen in a nascent stage in Mumbai. AIDS could also be managed more specifically by eliminating different sections of people and zeroing in on sex workers and the likewise. He does not deteriorate India's standing. On the contrary he says that it is pretty good and is on the road to improvement. He takes the example of Kerala and how well it has performed on the various parameters of the Human Development Index. He says simply that the key to India's development would lie in the transformation of UP's HDI into Kerala's. Moreover, he advocates people to pay more taxes universally, so that more money can be put in activities pertaining to social justice.

He also says that it would be very hard for him to choose between Microsoft and the Foundation. Both were born out of his passion. Microsoft had been this fanatical passion of his youth which helped him a lot to build the foundation. The foundation on the contrary has a beautiful romantic justice to it. He humbly says that reducing India's child deaths from 1.7million to 1 million will be the biggest gift he can ever get and is not keen or enthusiastic about a Nobel prize in comparison to the satisfaction of the former.

Questions:

- 1. How does Bill Gates differentiate his position at Microsoft and at the Foundation?**
- 2. What is his take on India and its social schemes?**

MODULE II

1. SATYAMEVJAYATE

A developing nation which is on its way to surpass China as the most populous country, the young India is still struggling to eliminate basic vulnerabilities like poverty and illiteracy let alone providing with an entertainment allowance or facility. Thus it is television sets which occupy tiny spaces in the living rooms of the common people that have revolutionized normal conversations. *SatyamevaJayate* is one such program which indeed showcases the philanthropic aspect of the entertainment industry. It has played an immense role in making people aware of what goes on in the society clandestinely, behind closed doors, where screams are suppressed and silence rules. The man who is steering the show is none other than Aamir Khan who has a larger than life image in the public psyche, since Bollywood is as much glorified as it is inbuilt in people's hearts. So when the legend itself comes out of his way and uses extremely simple language to make the people understand the atrocities happening around, it has a huge impact.

One of the episodes called *Break The Silence* is an eye-opener for every one beyond the divisions of class or status. It showcased the real life experiences of the victims of child sexual abuse. It was shocking to know that until 2012, there was no law in the IPC to criminalize these pedophiles on specific grounds. Child abuse is gender neutral was another insight. The heartbreaking stories of many inculcated in the audience not only emotions of pain but also of the need for affirmative action. However, the show could have been completely comprehensive if they included women pedophiles. The show was only concentrating on the victims who were both girls and boys, but failed to put forward that even women engage in child sexual abuse. Nonetheless the episode was a brilliant one where the host came up with tactics that could be used to educate or make the children aware of the "dangers" lurking around which would be really helpful to the parents who are often helpless due to the lack of words in the child lingua franca for it.

Another episode, *Every Life is Precious* throws light on to the health sector in India. The show referred to statistics that show the redundancy in public health sector and on the contrary a fast multiplying private health sector. The private medical colleges take in exorbitant donations from medical students which leads to the secondary exploitation of the patients by the doctors by prescribing unnecessary medications and diagnosis tests. This episode brought into focus the serious issue of medical negligence and reiterated that a prominent share of our GDP should be spend on medical sector with complementary health insurance which will reduce out of the pocket spending on health. India is a pharmaceutical giant and it is high time that the country goes on a progressive route where health care is totally inclusive.

The episode *Dignity for All* shows our complacency and rudeness towards an injustice that we perceive in our everyday lives. The idea of manual scavenging and dry latrines are as old as human origin. The manual scavengers are called as chamar, who are mostly placed in the 5th rung of the caste hierarchy. Even after the prohibition of this gross deed by enacting a law, the system continues to exist. The most paradoxical example is that of the Indian railways which is the largest open toilet in the world. The episode was pertinent in making us understand the plight of the humans suffering from a historical injustice, their crime being an accidental birth in the lowest caste. Doing away with the caste system in paper as well as walking the talk is the need of the hour.

Break The Silence

One shocking issue unraveled by Aamir Khan on the show about less-talked about Child Sexual Abuse. Parents always believed that a child is safest at home, but if home turns out to be the place that torments or haunts their children, then where do we turn our heads. Tears kept on flowing as the stories of agonized and painful incidents bore by victims kept on disentangling. According to a survey conducted in 2007, there were 53 percent of children who were sexually abused at a very young age and it embodies both the genders. Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Assam and Delhi had reported the highest percentage of such incidents at that the time of the survey.

The survivors who came forward and unfolded the grave and afflicting truth of their lives were Cinderella Prakash and Harish Iyer. Cinderella bore the abusive torments by a 55 year old relative of her, at the age of 12. She could not divulge the truth to her parents, only choice was to run away from the abuser every time he stepped into her house. On the other hand was Harish, who endured his suffering for 11 year span and was traumatized to the core. He tried disclosing it to his mother but was shunned to stay silent as his mother thought about what the world would say. She now regrets why she didn't she pay heed earlier which could have saved up her child's years which were meant to be memorable but were made horrid by a certain relative who not only molested Harish alone but also brought along others and all Harish could do was stay mum. But one day he accumulated all his courage and with a sudden adrenaline rush blurted out a big "No" which was the end to the torturing times he had through. The flabbergasting fact was that out of the 53.22 % sexually abused children, 53 % were boys. In maximum cases the abuser is someone close to the family and they very smartly play their moves so as no one gets to know their filthy crime.

Anuja Gupta of NGO RAHI (Recovering and Healing from Incest) stated the reasons as to why children don't speak up against such maltreatment, it is because parents on one hand say that they are keeping an open forum for their children to tell them anything, and on the other hand, they themselves don't talk about such things. Nishit Kumar of the agency Childline, talked about the Anchorage shelter case which is being battled in courts since last 11 years and even reveals another dumbfounding fact that there are no laws under the Indian Constitution dealing with Child Abuse and there are many loopholes in the judicial machinery. There were more victims who spoke of their agony on AV and shared how their haunting past has affected their present lives. The surprising revelation by experts was that the abuser sub-consciously thinks that he is not committing any crime and the child knows what is happening with him/her and also enjoys.

Towards the end, as Aamir had promised in the beginning of the show that the latter part of the show must be watched by the youngies even if the former being very hard-hitting for young minds shouldn't be, there was a workshop ,with children youngest being 5 and oldest being 10 years, educating them about "Good Touch, Bad Touch" via means of diagrams with three danger areas on their bodies being-chest, between the legs and bottom. He gave them pointers and asked them to confide their trust in someone whom they can trust implicitly and ask them to be their "Bodyguard", scream if they feel they are in danger and run to the nearest safe place where they can seek shelter in times of danger.

There is a bill underlying in the Parliament and still to become a law, Aamir appealed to the masses to give him support in pleading the Government to pass the law of Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Bill in Parliament and pledge their support against child sex abuse. Sri Devi who was the inspirational star that had positive effects on the survivor Harish Iyer and helped him pass those

years of excruciating pain both mentally as well as physically, along with his German Shepard dog, pleasantly surprised Harish and his each reaction was eye-pleasing. She also signed the letter which Aamir would send to the Parliament, requesting to pass the Bill as soon as possible

Every Life is Precious

The Fourth Installment of Aamir's reality check on society and awakening series of SatyamevJayate, dealt with the greedy medical practitioners who have made the whole Indian Medical system their business grounds and are exploiting people's blind trust on them. It was an episode of shocks rather than tears. We always have heard and believed that Doctor is someone next to God, God's incarnation on Earth, but if the same person breaks our trust into millions of pieces and stamps it under their feet, how vulnerable are we supposed to feel. The profession is riddled with unscrupulous doctors and hospitals out to make big bucks at the cost of patients and in a nation like India where still 65% of the population cannot afford to afford medical treatment such scenario worsens with each passing day.

The show opened with the dreadful stories of patients and their families who have been a victim of the money-making game so that Doctors could extract money out of them. VS Venkatesh could have healed the infected finger with an antibiotic in spite he had to undergo 4 surgeries, and spent around 2 lakhs for no required reason. Arvind Kumar had spent around 1.5 lakhs for just tests and could have healed with Rs.15 ORS packet. Such fraudulent practices left all flabbergasted, with the crude and cruel methods doctors in India have adopted.

Major PankajRai's wife, Seema, was suffering from a kidney ailment. Without her family's consent, the doctors took her to the operation theatre for kidney and pancreas transplant. Major Rai had to pay around Rs 8.25 lakh for the surgery and Seema lost her life too. Doctors didn't even inform the family about her demise and the switched off their mobile phones. This is sheer irresponsible and unaccountable behavior on part of the doctors. Owner of a Path lab in Mumbai, Dr. Anil Pichad used to overcharge his patients and used to give "cuts" to Doctors, has after a personal tragedy determined to be a corruption free individual, he performs all tests at a very low rate as compared to others. The shocking stories of women in Kowdipally village of Andhra Pradesh who were asked by doctors to get their uterus removed, for more than half of them it was not even required, put light on how the doctors exploited these poor farmers who had to sell of their lands, take loans, etc in order to derive money out of them.

Major General (Retd) SomJhingon, was the ex-chairman of Medical Council of India, who resigned after being disillusioned by the way the body functioned. He said it was only about money, money and money and MCI of India, is full of corruption with its roots spreading out at a pacing rate. Dr K.K. Talwar, Chairman, Board of Governors, Medical Council of India revealed that since 2008 there is not even one case where the license of a doctor have been cancelled. Dr Talwar had no satisfying reply to Aamir's questions. Aamir had laid before him the statistics of England for the years 2008-10, how many licenses had been permanently cancelled of Doctors in England, and in India it's been not even one.

Dr Devi Prasad Shetty, founder and chairman, Narayan Hrudayalaya group of hospitals, Bengaluru explained that under their various schemes every farmer pays only Rs 10 per month and the Government adds around Rs.30 or more to it so that the costs are born not solely by the farmers but jointly. And such cheap operation rates are possible because the no. of operations performed in Dr. Shetty's hospitals are around 35 per day, so that makes it more cost-effective. Likewise, Dr. Samit

Sharma, IAS, Managing Director, Rajasthan Medical Services Corporation revealed the use of Generic medicines and runs a shop which sells such medicines which are in no way inferior to the branded ones. Aamir, with the help of Dr. Shamit Sharma from Rajasthan, enlightened viewers by informing them about generic medicines that are available at affordable cost. Dr CM Gulhati, Editor, Monthly Index of Medical Specialties says that health services aren't a priority in India. He said the government should spend at least six percent of the GDP on the health services.

The episode was well-packaged and executed and the statistics disclosed were astounding. Like always the show ended on a musical note with beautiful composition by Ram Sampath and his team.

On Gender Issues

Since its launch in 2012, STAR India's groundbreaking social awareness series *SatyamevJayate* has become the premier platform through which Indians can discuss their society's most pressing issues. The series features Bollywood star Aamir Khan in conversation with victims, activists, and experts, as they explore such subjects as the caste system, alcoholism, and political corruption. On April 22 at the 6th annual [Women in the World Summit](#) in New York City, Khan spoke at length about how the show has addressed women's rights issues over the course of its three-season run.

Speaking in conversation with ZainabSalbi, founder of the nonprofit Women for Women International, Khan explained that women's issues have been a part of *SatyamevJayate* since the very first episode, which addressed the issue of [female feticide](#). That episode alone, streamed digitally and broadcast on multiple STAR channels in six local languages, was watched by roughly 50 million people, and now, years later, its effects are still being felt.

Khan said that since that first episode aired in 2012, census figures showing 914 girls born compared to 1,000 boys in the states of Maharashtra and Rajasthan (the worst states on record in terms of gender ratio) had changed radically. Today, the ratio has improved by 50 to 60 points, and local leaders have pointed to *SatyamevJayate* as a major contributing factor.

As the show has gone on, it has continued to consistently address issues facing women and girls in India, from domestic violence to the dowry system to sexual violence and rape. In its most recent season, which aired on STAR in the fall of 2014, one episode framed violence against women as not just a women's issue but as a [men's issue](#).

"Unless we redefine what it is to be a man, things aren't going to change," Khan said to Salbi. "You cannot raise a boy telling him not to cry. You are in effect distancing him from emotion and then you are surprised when he grows up and beats his wife." The talk also gave Khan a chance to reflect on the success of the show, which has garnered an audience of an estimated 517 million viewers and raised more than \$45 million for its NGO partners. "No one would have imagined that a show that speaks of such heavy topics would be so popular across the country," Khan said. "And the fact that it's so popular really speaks well of Indians today. We have issues, we have problems, but we want to move ahead and improve ourselves. That's what the success of the show tells us."

Questions:

1. **What is the impact of social reality shows on society?**
2. **Write a note on SatyamevJayate?**
3. **What do you think about child sexual abuse?**
4. **Do you think there is gender divide in the modern India? Comment.**
5. **What is the impact of mushrooming of private medical colleges taking in exorbitant capitation fees on the health fabric of the society?**

2. TELEVISION COMMERCIALS

Television commercials are one of the best advertising method in the modern world. Earlier, a company flaunting itself in a TV advertisement enjoyed great fanfare. Nevertheless, these days, there are many options for advertisers other than television. A detailed look into the advantages and disadvantages of television advertisements will show great insight

Advantages:

1. High reach: A single advertisement via satellite reaches millions of viewers at the same time
2. Low cost per contact: The humongous cost paid by the company to TV channels may be misleading because it reaches millions of people thus the per-capita expenditure of the company is very less.
3. High intrusion value: The advertisements that appear on TV are not in boring prints, but carry high quality videos with catchy statements, trendy music and vibrant colors. This would bag the reader's attention involuntarily.
4. High frequency potential
5. Quality creative opportunities
6. Segmentation possibilities through cable outlets

Disadvantages:

1. Greater clutter: Nowadays advertisements steal a lot of time frame and hence viewer's attention span is less. Moreover if the advertisement series is lengthy, the viewer might as well change the channel. Thus the advertisements figuring in the middle segment will have less recall. Most viewers use the DVR to cope up with clutter where they record the program to watch it at a later time.
2. High cost per advertisement
3. Low recall due to clutter, which is already mentioned in point 1
4. Channel surfing during commercials

These days to engross the readers' attention advertising companies are trying out creative tactics using the four mass communication tools- advertising, sales promotion, events and experiences and publicity. One example in the book is about the Zoozoos by Vodafone which first came in 2009 IPL tournament. The Zoozoos created a talk among the viewers and they eagerly waited for the heavy bottomed, funny looking characters. Many advertising companies are emulating Vodafone Zoozoos these days. Thus Television advertisements, in fact have a huge impact on the viewers choice.

Questions

1. **What are the advantages of Television advertisements?**
2. **What are the disadvantages of Television advertisements?**
3. **How has the Zoozoos made an impact in the advertisement arena?**

3. ONLY AN AXE AWAY

The film narrates the history of a unique campaign to save the Silent Valley from destructive development. The Silent Valley was declared a National Park in 1984. The Kerala State Electricity Board plans to build a dam on the fringes of the Silent Valley National Park at Pathrakkadavu, across the river Kunthi. Nature lovers are concerned that the proposed dam will harm the pristine evergreen forests in the valley. This film shares the anxieties of the people of Kerala about the future of the Silent Valley. *Only An Axe Away* is a well-researched documentary on the struggle to preserve the Silent Valley. The struggle to save Silent Valley from hydroelectric projects has been well documented by the media. But *Only An Axe Away*, by activists P. Baburaj and C. Saratchandran, who were at the forefront of the protests, takes one behind the scenes and makes a case for the bio-diversity of the valley to be preserved for future generations. The film begins with a visual showing the consequences of deforestation at Attapady near Silent Valley, which is also known locally as Sairandhri. The makers then go on to chronicle the first protests to save the forests in the 1970's when the Kerala State Electricity Board attempted to build a dam across the River Kunthipuzha that carves the valley. The film documents one of the first studies done of the valley by the Kerala Forest Research Institute (KFRI), which revealed the rich bio-diversity and several species of plants and animals that are not known to exist anywhere else in the world. The early activists and researchers are given plenty of minutes to make their case, and the activists include a number of big literary figures who played a major role in the protests — poets Sugathakumari and P.V. Krishna Warriar. As a result of the vociferous protests, the project was dropped and the Silent Valley National Park was formed which protected 89.5 sqkms of tropical rainforest. But the spectre of the forests drowning emerged again in 2002 when the Pathrakadavu Project was announced just 500 metres from the park boundary. The film documents the second series of protests and questions the model of development that India is pursuing. The makers also take pains to illustrate that it is just not environmental activists who are up in arms but also local people. Locals who depend on the river for their livelihoods are again given generous minutes and one man even threatens to blow up the dam. Overall the documentary is well-researched and that is a result of the directors' involvement in the struggle. If there is one negative, then it has to be the visuals of the valley, which could have been better.

Questions

- 1. How well does *Only an Axe Away* put forward the concerns of nature lovers in Kerala?**
- 2. Are such documentaries serving the purpose of conserving nature, comment.**

MODULE III

1. THE INTERNET AND YOUTH CULTURE

Some time ago, one of the most debated topics in various panels was whether television is a good or bad influence on the adolescents and the youth. The debate continued without reaching a fixed conclusion. After sometime this faded away because something more appealing and more pervasive took up the scene. That is the internet which has become a huge web that envelops almost all the gadgets we use. Hence, the question these days is the role of internet on adolescents and this is exactly what Gustavo S Mech is going to deal in his essay *The Internet and Youth Culture*.

He did an extensive study looking at the literature on the internet by the youth. The literature here means anything and everything contributed to the many websites, be it just comments, posts, statuses, various blogs, poems, articles, opinions and the likewise. While doing that he discovered that there are various angles through which one can look at the impact of internet on the youth. Out of these different perspectives he picks out two major perspectives. They are firstly, technological determinism and secondly, social construction of technologies. Now let us look at the two phrases in detail.

TECHNOLOGICAL DETERMINISM:

This can be begun with an illustration. Some time ago, when computers were trying to hit the Indian consumer market, it was a gadget which occupied a space in the living room of houses. As a matter of fact, whatever the children pondered on the computer were almost always under adult supervision. However, gradually things began to change when the size of the computers drastically reduced and laptops and palmtops flooded the market. The internet also transformed greatly. Earlier when one needed the heavy modem which was not portable, now we have multiple accesses to internet like wi-fi, li-fi and cellular internet facilities like 2G, 3G and 4G.

Apparently computers and internet have thus moved from the living room to the bedroom. The generation that has grown up with internet in their bedroom is the youth and adolescents of this time. When we say the phrase technological determinism it is exactly this crowd that we are taking into consideration. They are called 'net generation', 'millennium generation' and 'digital natives.' For them these digital spaces are inevitable for fostering their interaction and also for building up their own identity. In the modern times, it is said that if one does not have a presence in the many social networking sites, then he/she is invisible and irrelevant.

This acute digitization of their bedroom has led to the development of totally different values, behavioural patterns and ideologies among them compared to the earlier generations. They are more artistic and animated in their presentation, thanks to the immense potential for animation and entertainment that these gadgets offer. Moreover they are characterised as optimistic and talented with a flair for team work. They rely completely on the internet for vaster information and do not greatly use the traditional sources like libraries.

Thus technological determinism in a nutshell means the individual existence of technology that has the potential to condition the social environment and thus drive social change by itself. This social change will happen immaterial to whether the society wants the change to come

SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF TECHNOLOGIES:

This is a concept that is opposite to the technological determinism idea that we have dealt with in detail. Earlier under technological determinism, we said that a technology is all pervasive and potent in shaping the social characters. But Gustavo S Mech intervenes and warns that one should

not stick to that idea only and there are many perspectives to be looked upon. There could not be one angle, but multiple angles about the impact of internet. The second angle, which thus works opposite to technological determinism as said earlier, propounds that it is the society which shapes technology and not always vice versa. Different social groups differ in the meaning they attach to technology and the utilities they extract using these.

Most importantly they can be seen as social products that determine hierarchy and power structure of a society. Not everyone is equipped to own every kind of technological gadgets and thus these gadgets are intricate indicators of the class and power struggles in a society.

Moreover, it is not just the internet giants who can determine the way the 'millennium generation' thinks. On the contrary, the internet has become a platform where people can mobilise themselves and discuss on various liberal, free thoughts and act upon them. One such example is the Arab Spring being experience in the WANA(West Asia North Africa) nations, where ordinary people have risen above the authoritarian dogma using social media like Facebook and Twitter.

Thus by analysing the two perspectives it is clear that, one cannot stand alone, but both are equally important forces. Technology can shape the society and the society can adapt the technology for its own purposes are the nutshell of the discussion so far.

THE INTERNET AS CULTURE AND AS CULTURAL ARTEFACT:

The problem in understanding technological determinism and technology as socially constructed as two angles that go hand in hand is due to certain vagueness about internet as CULTURE and internet as CULTURAL ARTIFACT INTERNET AS CULTURE:

Internet as culture like cultural determinism stems from the idea that a person who uses the internet is insulated from all social connections that he had made in the real world. Thus it totally differentiates between the real world and the virtual world and believes that there is no connection between the two. A person in the virtual world can thus be a totally different person, with a completely changed identity. She/ He can choose his friends from any corner of the world and converse with them on likeminded topics, and do not have to stick with their physical friends of the social world. The youth can explore their real self which is hidden due to many social boundaries in the real world.

However this has technical problems. A person in the virtual world is not in almost all the cases completely shut out from the real world. Hence like SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF TECHNOLOGIES, internet is an artefact of culture. Simply internet is not only spelling out a culture with its own rules, but internet culture is also a product or an artefact created knowingly or unknowingly by the society. It is used as a means of communication and medium of expression to cater to the needs of the offline real world. The digital information and exchanges are explicitly linked to the social, political, cultural, economic and imaginary constructions of experiences in real time.

These phrases also finally establish the interrelationship and interdependence of the two features of the internet where a person can have a different identity online, but is always linked to the society he/she lives in. The internet need not be seen as a new world. People have just put the old wine in new bottles. They thus do the old things in new ways expanding communication to greater realms. Youth are using Instant Messaging (IM) services and other applications to carry out the same activities they were doing in the past. Thus only the media has changed but the cause and actions stay intact.

YOUTH AND THEIR PARTICIPATION IN MEDIA

Nowadays, internet users are not passive users of the internet. They have become active after the advent of Web 2.0. For instance, take the example of Wikipedia which is a massive online storehouse of information. The success of this online encyclopaedia is not only due to its creators, but also due to millions of users who keep on adding new information, editing existing data and deleting false ones. This type of intervention where users can also play a prominent part in creating information is thus gaining greater attention. This type of data is called UGC (User Generated Content). There are more common examples of UGC like YouTube videos, MySpace data, various blogs and the likewise.

There should not be a misconception that all youth are engaged in adding information onto the internet. For most of them internet offers a platform for socialising and building relationships that are outside their families and communities. Statistically, 93 percent have email operations, 68 percent engage in instant messaging applications and 55 percent are on social networking sites compared to 28 percent having online journals.

It is not true that people only converse with other people who are far away using IMs. When they get back from college or work they keep in touch with their peers using IMs like Whatsapp and Hike. These IMs bring in an effective **Micro co-ordination**. It is a concept by which real time and space can be fixed and changed and again fixed using various IM applications on mobile phones and thus can easily co-ordinate a meeting.

There are different kinds of social media and it is an interesting question that how the youth finds time to stay connected with the web amidst their busy schedule. The answer to this is **multitasking** where people switch from one app to another constantly. That is they may simultaneously check e-mails, while texting their friends on Whatsapp, listening to an audio book meanwhile. A less formed multitasking had existed in earlier days like students did their homework listening to music, but now it has gone to an all new level.

A study conducted in the US revealed that multitasking is not common when the primary media is television. When the primary media becomes the computer multitasking just shoots up where they browse, chat, watch videos at the same time.

EFFECT OF MICRO CO-ORDINATION AND MULTITASKING:

Most people believe that these activities might overload the youth and also expose them to strangers. But the results are far from that. Studies have shown that most of the people in social networking sites use them to keep in touch with their real friends. Only ten percent are strangers and 90 percent are acquaintances. It is also reported that the number of friends they have on their profile is important because that shows their social standing.

Internet is a fluid space which has so much opportunity. It should not only be seen as a world of its own, but also as a place where the real and virtual interact and create many dimensions of information and capacitates the individual simultaneously.

Questions:

1. **What is meant by technological determinism?**
2. **Explain social construction of technologies.**
3. **What is micro co-ordination?**
4. **Explain multitasking**
5. **Is multitasking rampant in television or internet? Why?**

2. WRITING ONLINE: WEBSITES, BLOGS AND SOCIAL NETWORKING

Social media largely comprises materials in writing than audio or video. So a good command over writing is absolutely necessary in making the content appealing and clear. The matter should be professional, credible and linkable. The writing must be: Clear: Readable and Understandable Concise: Straight to the point and efficient Consistent: Reliable, dependable Thus the 3Cs are the words one should keep in mind before writing an online piece.

First priority: The Reader

One has to always keep in mind that the whole exercise of writing in the blogs or websites or social media is for other people to understand what one is talking about. So the writer should always have the reader in mind and elucidate the material in their points of view. It is imperative to understand that in this technologically active world, they have a very short attention span and equally less time. They need to quickly grasp the information and move on. They would be only scanning for the information so the writer should be precise and legible in his information.

Writing for Websites:

It should be understood that people who read you website are not mostly doing it to engage in some fun reading, but for relevant information. They would only glance through sentences and hence, if information is not given quickly they would switch to other sites. The tips for good website etiquette are as follows:

- Choose keywords first
- Include a title on every page
- Use sub headings
- Keep paragraph and sentences short
- Use white spaces
- Use bullets and numbers
- Use short sentences and avoid using a lot of technical jargon
- Use sans serif fonts like Arial which is easy to read on a screen
- Proofread to eliminate errors

Writing for blogs

A blogger's life depends upon her/his catching other's attention to one's own creativity or thoughts.

- Do your research
- Have a catchy headline
- Start with a great introduction
- Stay focussed and do not digress from the topic
- Keep it social, casual and friendly
- Use the right tone
- Do not over promote yourself in your blogs
- Use pictures
- Be consistent
- Make a commitment, learn from your mistakes and keep writing great content

Writing for social networking sites:

Now social media is gaining so much prevalence. Gone are those days when one kept a diary. Now people spill their lives on social media. So cultivating social media etiquette is very important. Here are the tips for a good status update.

- It should be short
- Be genuine and avoid too much information
- Be generous by giving the readers information that will guide them
- Be grateful. A simple gesture like a thank you could make a huge impact
- The post should be like you are speaking to one person and not many
- Be clear, do not be vague
- Use correct punctuations
- Do not overuse the exclamation marks
- Ask questions
- Do not boast
- Do not write ill about others
- Be unique and have posts that are different from others
- Do not use the SMS language in your posts. The Facebook posts go out to a wider audience and will not create a good impression of you.

Questions:

1. What are the etiquettes to be followed in writing on social media?

3. HOW GOOGLE HAS CHANGED OUR LANGUAGE

Google is not an unknown term in the techno-savvy world. It is lesser known by its primary meaning which is one followed by one hundred zeroes. Nevertheless, now it is associated with entire gamut of searching and acquiring of vast amount of information of various kinds at different levels. Thus the computer giant company google is a constant companion of every person these days and they quickly resort to 'googling' any information that they need. The phrase 'googling' has thus been inducted to the language and is a highly used verb especially among the youth.

This is just like generations ago, the term Xerox was inducted from the photocopy machine company name to the act of photocopying. Similarly, aspirin, the name of an analgesic or pain medicine started to be widely used for any analgesic and the most common band-aids replaced adhesive strips. This itself shows that language is in constant fluidity, welcoming all kinds of adaptations and new words. This flexibility of language adds to its beauty. Sometimes words already adopted from mythology is subjected to double transformation while engaging with technology. One such example is the word narcissist evolved long back from the character Narcissus of the Greek mythology who was obsessed with his own beauty. Recently this term has undergone a change to denote people who are extremely preoccupied with themselves and constantly search their names on search engines. They are called narcissurfers which is indeed a blending of narcissism and surfing.

Google had played a pivotal role in bringing into the forefront a plethora of urban words formed recently. The company thrives because of its service that provides free information to people without any discrimination. It sells advertising which is linked to the information that you access. You would have seen these as pop ups while you browse for an information. Google also offers its platform in many languages. It has programs and applications that can translate subjects from one language to another. The indexing and retrieval of information by Google is top notch which makes it faster, easier to access and simple. However while google was expanding to other languages, the indexing and retrieval of Asian and African languages were not easy. This was carried out with the help of Basis Technology which offered google tools for searching in Asian languages. Thus Google continues to grow rapidly and widely across borders and cultures changing the very conventions of the world.

Questions:

1. How has google transformed from being a noun to a verb?
2. Talk about the fluidity of language.
3. What do you mean by narcissurfers?

MODULE IV

QUALITY OF VIDEOS UPLOADED IN THE SOCIAL NETWORKS AND ITS IMPACT ON THE AGE GROUP OF 18-25 YEARS STUDENT COMMUNITY

Internet is a vast platform, which people access for different reasons. Google is a widely used search engine, Facebook and twitter are social media sites, LinkedIn is a professional and business network and YouTube is a site which is a library of videos. YouTube not only has videos uploaded by individual users, but has collaborated with many media corporations like BBC, CNBC and the likewise. Thus YouTube targets both individuals and multinational production companies for increasing the audiences. Statistically, 60 hours of video is uploaded every minute on YouTube. Over 4 billion videos are viewed per day and over 800 million unique users visit YouTube each month. The videos are brimming with entertainment, news and information that a new term infotainment could be used to describe these videos. This is about to become “the biggest learning cycle in human history.”

The youth of today are very skilful in using technology. They have showed their mettle especially in using social media. They are referred to as Gen Y or generation why, which has followed generation X pertaining to their inquisitive or questioning nature. The study of emerging adulthood of this generation is very important to analyze behavioral patterns. This group comprises people who have their own identity, thanks to social media, but has not reached a financial security. But the self-identity is dominant and allow individuals to express their individuality. This age group of 18-25 is influenced by global parameters due to their vast interconnectedness with social media. They do not believe in a static world and asserts that that the world should be continuous and dynamic, that is always subjected to changes. They also believe that individuality is very important and each individual belonging to a group has a prominent role to play in bringing about change.

Being internet-savvy is also a boon in the education field. One can listen to interviews, lectures and presentations by experts in faraway places. Moreover, one can connect to many universities webpages and get what one wants. In addition to that, the best part of internet is that it is accessible, affordable and less time consuming. One can also showcase one’s talents by uploading a video on YouTube or Facebook. There are many self-made celebrities who have emerged from small towns with no sufficient platforms, using the prowess of social media. This platform is also used by human rights organizations and other civilians to showcase human rights violence and the extent of natural and manmade disasters and urge the world to extend solidarity with them.

As a matter of fact, as every issue has two sides, internet also has some disadvantages. Firstly, now a days, the youth wants to have the smartest phones available in the market but will not be always financially independent to make that choice. They resort to the EMI options, but ultimately is short of cash. Secondly, their morning starts with social media and their nights end with it. However what they are looking for is almost all the time information that is not useful for their overall moral and social development like pornography, defamation and materials encouraging criminal conduct. What one requires is prudence in sorting out the material one needs and eliminating all the nonsensical information. Otherwise social media has the potential to devour you.

Questions:

1. What are the characteristics of Generation Y?
2. How is Generation Y different from Generation X?
3. What do you mean by the term infotainment?
4. How is being techno – savvy a boon in the world of information and technology?
5. How has social media helped small towners to achieve great heights?
6. What are the disadvantages discussed about internet?
7. What is the solution put forwarded to eliminate the disadvantages?

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MODULE I

AN INDIAN ENGLISH POPULAR FICTION

Nampally Road

Meena Alexander's novel *Nampally Road* takes place in the city of Hyderabad amidst unrest and opposition to Chief Minister LimcaGowda, whose oppressive and violent rule has spurred the city's residents into protest. Set during India's fraught state of emergency from 1975-1977, enacted by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, where in the aftermath of war with Pakistan, elections were suspended and the government launched a massive crackdown on civil liberties and any forms of opposition. The book focuses on a young woman who has returned from England in order to both teach literature and make sense of herself and her own history. Mira Kannadical has returned after finishing her education in England. Arriving in a changed city, she becomes involved with Ramu, a passionate political activist. As her relationship with Ramu deepens, so too does her understanding of the political situation in Hyderabad. Mira struggles to reconcile her studies, her love of poetry and literature, with the violent reality of her city. The novel's vivid and poetic language traces Mira's burgeoning political awareness as she witnesses life on Nampally Road and grows more involved with the protests surrounding the brutal gang rape of a young Muslim woman, Rameeza Be, and the murder of her husband at the hands of police. In this two-part excerpt, Mira attempts to explain the beauty and relevance of Wordsworth to her students. As Mira searches for a way to make sense of what literature can mean when confronted with such bloodshed and to examine what Wordsworth can signify for a people terrorized by the state, Ramu arrives to take her to the police station where Rameeza is being held. What follows is a strange moment of clarity as Mira is pulled from the classroom, her space of abstract thought and poetic meditation, and into the middle of a fierce protest at the police station.

Nampally Road in the novel acts as a trope signifying the political and social turmoil the nation in the making has encountered and its bearings on each individual and the society at large. The slim novel depicts the inner world of Mira Kannadical, who after four years in England, getting her Wordsworth and the Romantics right, returns to teach in Hyderabad - the classroom is "a converted bedroom in what had once been the home of the poet Sarojini Naidu". But what's Wordsworth doing in Hyderabad? In Alexander's apocalyptic Hyderabad, the "whiffs of tear gas" never leave the air, sirens are never more than a heartbeat away, and Rameeza Be lies almost dead in the lock-up, gang raped by the police.

This is a city over which the Emergency Grande Dame, the lady with the iconic white streak, casts a big, if distant, shadow. Chief minister LimcaGowda casts a more menacing shadow with his "ever ready" securitymen and their "iron-tipped batons" coming down brutally on dissent, especially on the helpless orange sellers protesting taxes. Wordsworth comes up far short. Mira returned home, as the poet often did, to places he had loved. But for her, writing to "stitch" her life together - "my birth in India a few years after national Independence, my colonial education, my rebellion against the arranged marriage...my years of research in England" - became meaningless as fear gripped the city.

Here, the novel touches the raw core of those aware of state brutality yet do nothing about it. Mira's initial recourse to her inner world is contrasted sharply with her lover Ramu, who chooses the equally romantic call to arms: the active rebel for a cause.

Alexander's characters are vividly etched - the "Little Mother", the doctor who cares for patients through the turmoil and the marvellous portrait of LimcaGowda who tries to match his predecessor NGR, the screen idol. A cardboard city is erected for his birthday and his face replaces the wheel in the tricolour.

What makes Meena Alexander's debut novel a good read is her double vision. She is an outsider: Alexander grew up in India and North Africa and now teaches writing in New York. And, being an Indian, she can also effectively portray how the changes in the Indian social and political landscape affect the individual.

The Orange Seller's Protest

Ramu and Mira found a seat at the New Mysore Café, a spot that could offer a binocular vision to the bustling Nampally Road. Ramu is a person who has declined the prestigious Rhodes scholarship and is currently pursuing PhD at Jawaharlal Nehru University. The setting is during the time of Emergency and there is a wave of panic and anxiety in the air. Even though the story is set in the South, much distant from Delhi where the lady (Indira Gandhi) unleashes her power, Hyderabad has built a replica of Delhi there through its Chief Minister, LimcaGowda. His mercenaries, called the Ever Ready are ever ready to mutilate many innocent bodies. In this chapter there is the scene of an orange sellers' protest on Nampally Road which Mira and Rau witness from the café. Suddenly, a gang of Ever Ready goondas sprang up from nowhere beating up the orange sellers. There was blood everywhere and the scene looked so catastrophically. However, curiously, the streets were spick and span the next day even eerily smelling of perfume. Right away in the first chapter Meera Alexander brandishes at the space sponsored violence, suppressing individuals physically as well as ideologically.

Orange sellers stand here for every person in the country who is sidelined, whose voices are unheard. LimcaGowda is also the representative of many politicians and business tycoons who play games in disguise to continue in power. Ramu and Mira are in the first chapter mere spectators who at least have a sense of dissent in them against the state. Gradually these characters have the potential to develop into round figures with agency.

LittleMother:

Mira Kannadical was offered a job at Hyderabad Central University and Siddharth, her friend is drawing a map to his house in Hyderabad where his mother lives. Mira is offered a stay there by Siddharth. He also warns her not to say a word about his affair with the white woman, Vanessa. When Mira finally got there she was enamored by DurgabaiGokhale, Siddharth's mother. Her hospitality was utmost that she did not let Mira hunt for a room elsewhere. Mira had to go out of her ways for Durgabai to accept a small amount as rent. Thus started a beautiful friendship between Durgabai and Mira. She was gynecologist, pediatrician and obstetrician – all rolled into one. She considered her profession as a service and treated everyone who came to her with compassion. All her students have grown into sprawling doctors drawing lucrative salaries,

but she considered it as a mere farce. She was a staunch nationalist and would glisten with pride when she delivered babies. "A new India is being born," she says. There is also a reference to DurgabaiGokhale where she treats a boy mauled by a leopard with concern, compassion and care. She had a wave of sympathy and admiration for everyone around who tried to offer the world their own space of compassion and generosity. She talks very endearingly about the bicycle man who picks up children out of the streets and treat them as well as he can with some rice and dhal. He represents the element of innate goodness in an individual. In the wake of impending problems of the Indian nation in the making, struck by the most basic yet lethal calamities like poverty, the bicycle man does an exceptional service to the society by adopting the boys. More information about Durgabai is spilled by her friend, Swami Chari who described a fierce and individualistic Durga fighting with her mother to marry the man she loved. One evening, when the house was hovering in silence, Durgabai opened the baggage of her memories, narrating the death of her husband washed away from a tempestuous ship. She has still kept the spectacles he wore safely.

The Terrace At Night

This chapter basically deals with the narrator's own predilections and perplexities. She is facing lot many conflicts within herself. Firstly her education has been in Nottingham, really far away from the place she was born, India. She was not completely ready to have a solitary Nottingham sojourn, but she had to. There were instances where she had to free herself from the age old customs imposed on her by her culture. Hence to go against those she adopted certain symbolic ways of dissent like eating with her left hand. It was not to prove her dissent to anyone but herself. However, she was unable to completely frame her individuality there and when SonaNivas College of Hyderabad offered her a job, she was quick to accept that.

However, even in Hyderabad, she was experiencing conflicts and a sense of belonginglessness pervaded her sensibilities. There is an instance where she tells Ramu that she is a twenty five year old woman aspiring to write her thoughts. But she is not able to take off from her mind the excess Wordsworth and Husserl that she had done in Nottingham. She becomes a prisoner to the vagaries of celebrated writers.

Countless number of times, she could relate herself to the poet Wordsworth, who was always the poet of the country, who wanted to travel to those lands where his heart laid. We also see the marital and sexual conflict of Indian womanhood, where Mira's mother has been in the look out for prospective grooms. Mira evades all that deciding to have no strings attached with one man and be constantly on the move. However, she explores her sexuality with Ramu, when she disrobes herself of her sari. Though Mira is constantly apprehensive about whether Ramu would think of her to be a bourgeoisie writer, after their sexual unison, they both in general and Mira in particular takes a more mature view about the social issues .

Thus the chapter then quickly return to the social issues where LimcaGowda is spending a fortune for idolizing himself. There is so much criticism against LimcaGowda stemming from the students. But the liberal V.C does not try to stop the activists and the chapter ends with Ever Ready's detour which is ever mysterious to the common people.

LauraRibaldo

This small chapter talks about Laura, a Goan Christian lady settled in Hyderabad with her

husband and her aspirations to migrate to Canada, which according to her is a paradise, as constructed for her by her sisters working there. She is a woman of few means, who is constantly abused by her husband. She is a devotee of the virgin of Calangute now moved to the church of Bomjesus in Goa. Laura and Rani have a very intimate friendship bonded over Bollywood and gossips.

What is substantial in this chapter might be the description towards the end about Gandhi, who breathed life into the struggle for independence some thirty years ago. But now he stood lifeless as statues all over India and the world, being merely an icon. That in fact is greater iconization compared to that of the virgin of Calangute

Wordsworth in Hyderabad

This chapter talks about Mira's Wordsworth class in a makeshift classroom. Her mind was not completely stable and she was preoccupied with the issue of Rameeza. However, she was unsure of making glaring remarks about it in the class. But finally he resolved to speaking about the atrocities India is facing since British Raj. She could not however complete it when Ramu came running asking her to suspend the class. Ramu told her two things, Little Mother was ill and Rameeza Be is half dead and the latter was more important. Hence they rushed to Gowliguda police station to rescue her.

Rameeza Be

This is a short but intense chapter where Rameeza is rescued from the police station by a group of people. Rameeza and her husband was walking back home after watching a movie and she was gang raped by a group of drunk policemen. The mob who rescued her created a huge ruckus in the city. However since Limca's birthday was hurrying near, the fury was contained. Ever ready arrested many people. It is suspected that Ramu is also among the ones who are arrested.

Her Fever

Little mother was in great agony. The most striking aspect about this chapter is that her agony is being compared to the happenings in Hyderabad. She even gets nightmares and finds parallels in the stagnant and equally violent atmosphere of the city. Slowly she unravels her memory in one of those darkest nights to Mira over some boiling dal. She talked about Savitribai, her sister who had attended Fatima, the Nizam's wife in labour a long long time ago. Savitribai saved the kid and the mother and Nizam luxuriously showered her with gold coins. However the cruel ways of the Nizam are described in the chapter. The reader could not just dismiss the cruelties of the Nizam as a story, but would find parallels in the current situation of Hyderabad.

A Dark Room

The chapter starts with Laura packing her stuff and thus her world to go to a new land-Canada. Meanwhile the curfew is lifted and there is just twenty four hours to Limca's birthday celebration. Ramu and Mira go to meet Rameeza through dark alleys and winding ways. Curiously, when they met Rameeza, she drew a picture – almost in a déjà vu manner- where blocks and rectangles made a pyramid where flesh soared out. A replica of what Mira had dreamt about the other day.

The History Lesson

This chapter has its name due to the incident where Ramu and Mira drink at the bar and Ramu gets a high, spilling out the brutalities on people throughout historical time. Finally they make their way to the hotel where Ramu stays and make love with each other. However, ultimately Ramu announces his plans to engage in active agitation and Mira shudders. The chapter ends where she climbs down the steps of the hotel, before day break, all alone.

CardboardCity

A myth is an extended metaphor, where one could peg stories to suit one's convenience. In this chapter LimcaGowda is trying to make a saga out of his life, blowing himself out of proportion. This made up cardboard city has drained every essence that Hyderabad ever had. The streets were wiped out clean from beggars, everyone wore a mask of jubilation- a pseudo carnivalesque spectacle spearheaded by every modern governments, witnessed round the globe. But as a poet has once remarked, Blood would be shed like mist but people would conquer in the end, there is this frenzy of a violent mob against Limca. One can only guess the ramification of it. Parallely, Rameeza is at Little Mother's house almost starting a conversation with Mira Kannadical.

MODULE II

A SECTION FROM AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF AN INDIAN

Sunny Days

1. The First Step

In the starting of the chapter, Sunil Gavaskar gets the complete attention of the reader by narrating events just after his birth. He was born with a tiny hole on his ear and his uncle happened to notice it. However on the next day, baby Gavaskar was replaced by some other baby accidentally, and fortunately due to the tiny hole which the uncle had seen earlier, he reached in the arms of his mother. If fortune had not shone well Gavaskar would have been in that fisherman's family sailing beyond the horizons now.

Then he moves on to talk about the impending help his parents have been on shaping his career. How his mom used to bowl at him in their small alleyway and was once hit by his straight drive is heart rendering. He also talks about his school, St. Xaviers, which played a prominent role in nurturing his dreams.

9. My Finest Hour

Sunil Gavaskar went to Trinidad and Tobago for a cricket match with the West Indies and is narrating his experience there. Firstly, he describes the immensely scorching heat of the island. After net practice, his throat almost chapped that he gulped ice cold water into his throat. Unfortunately he had a hole in his tooth that one ice crystal got into it. It was an unbearable pain since then. The most horrifying part was that he had to play a test stretching upto six days, from the next day. The team doctor forbade Gavaskar to extract the tooth since it would engage a lot of analgesics, which would in turn make him drowsy and unfit to play the game. However the match against the Windies was a memorable one, where he scored double hundreds in both the innings. It was one of the best matches in his career, but all he could think of was getting relief from his pain.

15. The Windies Again

This chapter is when the West Indies was touring India. Gavaskar was appointed the Vice Captain, but he was asked to remain silent about it. Later when the captain, Tiger Pataudi could not make it into the next match, Gavaskar was promoted as captain of the side. It was indeed a great moment for him to lead India from the front. However that did not materialize because his finger broke in the first match at Nasik. Thus the Calcutta match was played without him. He was hoping things would be better in the Madras match but was the reverse. He could play the test in Bombay at the new stadium, Wankhade. Gavaskar has so much praise for the crowd at Wankhade. He says that they know the spirit of Cricket and cheers for any team or player who plays good cricket not caring whether it is the home team or not. Some good cricket was played at Bombay and Windies won the match.

Simultaneously the Ranji trophy was also going on, where Bombay played against Karnataka. He says "The new stadium at Bangalore had brought luck for Karnataka the precious year and with it the Ranji trophy. The new stadium at Bombay had been equally lucky for us, and the Ranji Trophy was back with us for the twenty fifth time in forty years." However he says that his track record at the Ranji was dismal, failing to score a century for two successive years.

MODULE III

A TRAVELOGUE BY A MALAYALI WRITER IN TRANSLATION

In the Land of the Kappiris

III In South Rhodesia

South Rhodesia was then seen as a place in Africa where acute racial discrimination was practiced. Much like South Africa, it was a self-governed country, ruled by white people. The degree of racial discrimination could be assessed by looking at Pottekkatt's train journey to Rhodesia. There was a bogey, dirtier than a cowshed where the Kappiris crammed themselves in. It was a claustrophobic dungeon where no sunlight could enter. However there was the white's coupe which was an abode of luxury. In addition to that, the bogey Pottekkatt sat in was informally reserved for Asians, and no White would even come there by chance even though there was a lot of room in the compartment since he was the lone Asian traveler.

On reaching Bulawayo, he looked around for a porter to help him with luggages. Incidentally, he met a Tamilian porter who was more than happy to see an Indian and particularly a Madrasi in Rhodesia. He expressed his desire to see India, the stories about it which he has heard luxuriously from his father, an indentured migrant. He refused to take any money for his work, but gifted Pottekkatt a large Gold-leaf cigarette packet. In return he requested for an eccentric favour asking the author to send a magical thread or amulet from a Kerala magician to ward off his evil enemies and make his life prosperous.

On detour in Rhodesia he also saw the Great Zimbabwe Ruins, which shows the might of the tribe Sabaeans who drove away the indigenous Bushmen tribe, thus owning the entire expanse of gold mines. The Portuguese had reached Rhodesia through the Zambesi River, but it was the British who held strong there. This is the story of Rhodesia, sandwiched between Zambesi and Limpopo rivers.

IV The Victoria Falls

As Lord Curzon remarked, Victoria Falls is more fascinating than even the Niagra waterfalls of America. The average height of the former being 347 feet whereas the latter is only 170 feet tall. Brushing aside the statistical facts about Victoria, it is a larger than life wonder. It could be described as boulder of snowy mist falling freely through a majestic crevice amidst the gorges. The Victoria falls stand out from the rest of the waterfalls when one looks at its point of origin. It interestingly originates in the plains in contrast to many others that originate from the hills and the mountains. From there it traverses a great distance and has many islands floating on it. These islands divide the one majestic Zambesi into four waterfalls – the Eastern Cataract, Rainbow Falls, the Main Falls and Devil's Cataract. The water droplets falling out from the falls get dispersed on to the evergreen forest beside the waterfall and is thus being rained over for millions of years.

Pottekkatt also saw a footprint on a rock there named as Eve's footprint which he equated to Sree Rama padam at Ramakalmedu near the Pamba River. He goes on to describe various sights of interests across the river. There is the statue of Lord Livingstone, who is allegedly given the accolade as the first European to witness the falls. There is also a carving of the year 1885 on the bark of a tree, when he first saw the falls. There is also the mention of a tree called baobab which is described as ugly with a large trunk and a bulging pot belly. It is indigenous to the Africas and is revered very highly

V The Indians of East Africa

Pottekkatt mentions time and again that the Indian population in Africa comprised mainly the Gujaratis who were affluent businessmen. The rest of them were Malayalis who occupied clerical jobs and Tamilians who did manual labour. However, the British were not favorable to the multitude of Indians in Africa. This stemmed out from various reasons. Mainly, the Indians knew the language very well and had a very friendly attitude towards the Africans. They had everything from meat to clothes at one single place which the English could never dream about. However, Pottekkatt does not have very good things to say about these greedy Baniyas. He says that they are also of the same mold as the British are exploiting the Africans to make profit. Nevertheless, the British wants to drive out Indians from Africa so that they can have a monopoly in exploitation. In degree, the Indian exploitation is much less when compared to the Europeans. Pottekkatt then brings on an excerpt from the speech of Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru who constantly asked the Indians settled in Africa to work for the welfare of Africa, which is seconded by the author. Unlike other chapters, here we see a disappointed Pottekkatt criticizing the Indians who are proud of their Indianness, but shy away from its essence.

VI From Blantyre to Dodoma

This is a long chapter describing Pottekkatt's journey through the forests to Dar-es-Salam or Tanganyika. The usual route to Tanganyika is to go to Beira by train and then proceed by ship. Pottekkatt travelled first to Lilongwe by bus, thinking to catch the train to Beira. On his way, one of his luggages went missing, and he informed the askaris (policemen) about it. Though the author did not have any hope in locating his bag, the askaris meticulously fetched it for him. Till date, he does not know how the askaris managed it. In Lilongwe, his Maharashtrian host Mr. Dharabe told Pottekkatt about his acquaintance, Mr. Gokhale who is going to Dodoma in his lorry, which would traverse the forests, thus reducing the total distance considerably. Pottekkatt was more than happy to take this offer. Mr. Gokhale had only two things to talk about: his wife's culinary skills and the efficiency of his truck. Unfortunately, his truck's radiator failed and they were travelling through a drought hit area. Hence they had to buy water which cost them more than petrol on their way.

At Mbeya, Pottekkatt realized that the whites do not allow the natives to live within the city. They have separate space outside the city limits, called the Native Towns. The Whites are on a civilizing mission trying to make the Kappiris sophisticated, he remarks jeeringly. However he does not stereotype the entire white population like that and fondly remembers Mr.V, an Englishman who is critical of the English ways.

VII Looking back at Nyasaland

Unfortunately, Pottekkatt in this chapter has looked at Nyasaland with a stereotypical vision of Africa being a dark continent. Nyasaland is a “dark country, its plains burnt and blackened by forest fires, its black people draped in black clothes.” Pottekkatt looks at Nyasaland with an outsider’s eye as he is one. But he does not show a big heart which is accommodating enough of others’ customs and beliefs. Instead takes the tone of a self-aggrandizing mission of civilization which the Europeans fondly call as the white man’s burden.

Nyasaland is a protectorate of the British. However, they have not done any massive developmental activities there since their only intention is that of exploitation. For instance Nyasaland has huge mineral wealth, but The British does not want to indulge in long term projects since they do not know for how long they would be in Nyasaland. Hence they only concentrate on tobacco cultivation.

Nyasa lake is the third largest lake in Africa. He mentions about the Yao tribe who came from Portuguese Africa. They have a custom called unyongo, where the boys and girls are taught conjugal rites and the art of love making. The Ngrus are another tribe and have cannibalistic traits. They file their upper teeth and make them sharp and pointed. They do not even hesitate to feed on their own kith and kin. However cannibalism has reduced considerably since the advent of the British.

VIII Swahili

Swahili is the common language of Kenya, Tanganyika, Uganda and Zanzibar. It means the language of the coastal land. The uniqueness of Swahili is that they start with tight consonant clusters like mtoni and msumku. Swahili has greatly borrowed from Arabic and even Hindi. It is a simple language with no script of its own and uses the English script. Pottekkatt later unfolds an interesting anecdote about his ‘mastery’ of Swahili where he becomes a translator of Swahili between a bus driver and a penniless English man who boarded the bus.

IX The Indian Bwana

Indians mostly occupy the jobs of clerks or employees in private Indian school, if we except Gujaratis and other north Indian businessmen. They do not draw lucrative salaries unlike popular conception. The Holmes Salaries Commission had recommended a hike in their salary, but this nowhere reached the salary of the whites. However, since Africa is much cheaper than India, they could afford a luxurious lifestyle with splendid living rooms and three to four servants. They were given four months leave and second class tickets to visit their homelands in every four years. After retirement these Indians were skeptical about returning to India since they are unsure about the way their motherland would treat them.

He also talks about the antagonism that people from different parts of India have for each other, which is revised and reinforced in Africa. North Indians slight the Madrasis, Goans revel in the colonial glory and the likewise. Pottekkatt is deeply bothered about the trajectory of such intolerance and muses over how this could hold a nation together.

Teaching Humor in English Learning Classes

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Abstract:

Humor constitutes a very important genre of literature. Humor is executed through satire, mock epic, parody, lampoon and the like wise. However humor differs significantly from tragedy or other genres in general because of its close association with the mannerism of the language through which the plot unfolds. Hence translation may largely spoil the naturalness of humor. So translation if unavoidable should pertain to certain parameters. Moreover the rendition of humor can be effective using ICT thus taking a blended approach by both the students as well as the teachers.

Introduction

Comedy is one of the genres of literature which relies mainly on the timely rendering of suitable phrases or sentences which impart humor, laughter and most often pointing to significant undertones of the plot. However, the purpose of it gets ruined in classrooms when the teacher tries to recreate that comedy from a particular literary text by explaining it over and over again. It turns to be a string of words to the audience/ students, and they not only not take it humorously but dismiss it as an exaggerated rendering. This is my recent experience of teaching the

first year students a comic prose. This paper thus would concentrate on how translating comedy in the class becomes a 'polite lie' and how a rendering of comedy should touch upon both deep and surface structures. In addition to that, there will be a focus on how to incorporate the digital technology to effortlessly bring out the humor in the texts. Moreover, translation if essential should stick on some basic parameters which are envisaged in the concluding part of the essay.

Students are at a disadvantage at picking up humor in a literary text because they do not have the aid of body movements or voice modulations in the text. However, the writers of humor engage certain devices to communicate humour which will be discussed now. The first device is called an understatement or meiosis, in which the author invests less energy in conveying a meaning. One famous example of an understatement is Mark Twain's rendering that 'the reports of my death are greatly exaggerated' when he was accidentally killed by New York journal.

Secondly, the device hyperbole, which in contrast to understatement exaggerates out of proportion a minor incident. James Thurber's *The Night the Ghost Got In* does exactly the same when the boy in the house hears a noise and that leads to a lot of confusion which ended up in grandfather shooting one of the policemen. I will come back to *The Night the Ghost Got In* time and again since the entire idea of this paper stemmed while I was teaching that particular text to the open course students.

The third device is the comic irony where the author writes something and intends just the opposite. The celebrated example of comic irony is 'Yet Brutus says he was ambitious; and Brutus is an honorable man' which helps Mark Anthony to incite the public in raising fingers against Brutus for killing Caesar in William Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*.

The fourth device is the satire which is used to excellence by many writers from the days of Dryden and Pope. It employs censure and ridicule against the follies and vices of an individual, an institution or the society in general. Swift's *A Tale of a Tub* hurls at religion and contemporary writing.

Since the basic classification of humor is done, let me define the target group of students. The group neither constitutes the enthusiastic reader who appreciates literature in general nor the fluent English speaker who shares borders with the Native speaker. Our group is the students who have English as their second language and English does not constitute their primary area of interest or study. These students are usually taught using a sentence to sentence translation methodology. The feasibility of such a teaching is beyond the scope of this paper. Nevertheless the point stated is that they can mostly comprehend a text only with substantial aid from the teacher.

That brings us to the fact a comedy is far more difficult than a tragedy for these students since they would need to know the intricacies of the language to even identify humour. This is the same case while watching a historical *Troy* or tragic *Haider* is evident in its playing out on the screen while in *Chillar Party* or *Dr. Strangelove* one has to patiently detect humour. This takes me back to two instances in my life, one as a student and another as a teacher of English.

The first experience was way back in 2000 in my fourth grade when I read Jerome K Jerome's *Uncle Podger Hangs a Picture* in the course. I could fairly well read and understand each sentence, but miserably failed to recognize it as humor. The story is just an instance where Uncle Podger wants to hang a picture on the wall. In order to do such a simplistic task like that he assembles scores of children and adults to help him. Finally the picture falls.

My second experience is very recent. I was engaging first year students their open course and was teaching John Thurber's *The Night the Ghost Got In*. To my dismay I realized that the humour was completely lost in explaining the situation. There was no inherent meaning in the text. The plot is a two liner and the crux lied in imbibing those small, funny and exaggerated actions. That would have been an ardent task for students who think in their mother tongue and translate it into English while speaking.

Comedy or in fact subtle humor can be best conveyed using digital technology. Now ICT is all pervasive and teachers should exploit it to the fullest in all realms. The short videos of both *Uncle Podger Hangs a Picture* and *The Night The Ghost Got In* is available on YouTube. YouTube is the major website as far as teachers are concerned which is a reservoir of movies on anything and everything.

Another effective way of using ICT is asking the students to enact the entire story using an appropriate script. This could be recorded and uploaded. This will help in enabling the video in having an international audience thus inviting multiple levels of responses, which will then boost the students to better themselves and do more of such activities. Thus the crux lies in identifying that the pulse of the 21st century lies in ICT, and hence revolve it around the syllabus which will lead to greater development of the student.

Apart from using ICT, students and teachers alike can employ translation in the right way and this way is delineated below. Literal translation of the text into the mother tongue corrodes the essence of the text. The conception that it will aid teaching is a myth. Diot is of the opinion that 'while the denotations can roughly be translated into a different language, the connotations cannot. They resist the process of exportation and perish in the shipping.' A comedy has much to do with

socio-cultural parameters of the place. Hence a blind literal translation will seem absurd and as Robert Graves calls it 'a polite lie.' 'The exact sets of semantic components fit into the much broader communicative patterns of the language, but what is not said should also fit' (Nida, 1971) If one is translating, one should not be oblivious of the language varieties like the regional dialect, temporal dialect, class dialect and idiolect. Simply, the translation should not be then a mere literal one but should be blended into the socio cultural scenario of the the language translated into. As McGuire rightly points out 'a surgeon operating on the heart cannot neglect the body that surrounds it, so the translator treats the text in isolation from the culture, at his peril' (McGuire, 1980) This can be clearly shown using the visual media in the distinction between the 2 movies, *Hamlet* in English and *Haider* in Hindi. Both are adaptations of William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, which links the regal body and the body politik. However, the body politik portrayed in the English *Hamlet* is royalty in its essence. But *Haider* took a giant leap and boldly placed the plot in the Kashmir of AFSPA. The main plot of procrastination and revenge remain but what changes is the socio cultural setting, by which only the individual audience can rate a performance or a book.

Needless to say while the process of translation happens 'some sort of modification of the native language concept to fit a foreign language equivalent' is also necessary making it a two way process. Thus through translation in the appropriate way there is inculcated a greater awareness of the complexity of the language. The student and the teacher should have a multifaceted approach in teaching humor in class. They should incorporate ICT as well as translation appropriately. Moreover, a basic development of reading, writing, listening, comprehending and communication skills along with the above discussed activities can enhance the overall equation of the student with English language. Thus gradually it will enable the students to think and speak in English.

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Native Media *in* English

K. Rizwana Sultana



with
DVD

ALWAYS LEARNING

PEARSON

Native Media in English

**Prepared for Common Course A05, Semester III
Undergraduate Programme of the University of Calicut, Kerala**

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Native Media in English provides for the development of communicative skills in English—listening, speaking, reading and writing, even as it treats inter-personal relationships as organic activities that stem from live situations, placing intellection above mechanical repetition and interaction above one-way teaching. Needless to say, the book is only a resource that could be used creatively by imaginative teachers. It is an effective aid for acquiring social finesse and affords ample scope for debating and extension activities. Emerging as they do from real-life situations, these pedagogical elements stimulate thinking, provoke without offending, and inspire the students to take social values seriously, to deliberate about building a better nation, and to take constructive roles in the conversations that are part of the mass media and the social media.

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