

**ABROGATION AND APPROPRIATION OF ENGLISH IN
ARUNDHATI ROY'S
*THE GOD OF SMALL THINGS***

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Abstract

During the colonization, the colonizers used English language as an instrument of control and established a power hierarchy based on the linguistic superiority by suppressing all the native tongues. However, the writers of the postcolonial world have challenged this hegemonic power of colonial language and subverted it by using different strategies into their own socio-cultural contexts. Roy is no exception, as she chutnifies English language by abrogating and appropriating it in *The God of Small Things* in order to represent her socio-cultural realities. Roy's abrogation and appropriation of English reflects that India is not a passive entity to tolerate the colonial legacies; rather she challenges the western power dimensions, dismantles them and brings them under her own terms and conditions. Therefore, *The God of Small Things* is no longer written in colonial English, rather it is an Indian novel written in Indian English.

Keywords: Abrogation and appropriation, Indigenization of English, Colonial inheritance, Cultural representation, Glossing, Untranslated words, Interlanguage, Syntactic fusion, Code-switching.

INTRODUCTION

This research work studies abrogation and appropriation of English in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*. Published in April, 1997 in Delhi, the novel became the best seller within no time and won the most prestigious literary award, Booker Prize, which established Roy's status on international literary horizon.

In the landscape of *The God of Small Things*, Roy's master strokes scrutinize and satirize Indian politics, public administration, colonial legacies and cast ridden Indian society. The story of the novel set in a small town, Ayemenem, near Kottayam Kerala, in India, revolves around the "Dizygotic" twins, Esthapan (Estha) and Rahel of a Syrian Christian family. On a fateful day, the story takes a tragic turn, when it is revealed that their mother "Ammu" a divorcee has an illicit

relation with an untouchable Velutha, and their half-British cousin Sophie Mol accidentally drowned in Meenachal River.

The subsequent events have destroyed the Ipe family and shattered the childhood of Estha and Rahel. This domestic drama though is the story of Estha and Rahel, brings the socio-cultural background of Indian society, particularly the caste-system, which outlaws inter-caste relationships and the marginalization of woman among other themes into the lime light together with Roy's distinctive narrative style and innovative use of English language.

This innovative use of English language and artistic structure of *The God of Small Things* have compelled the critics and reviewers to take notice of it. As James Wood claims that, the greatest pleasure of *The God of Small Things* lies in its language, which makes the novel a play field of linguistic innovations (James, 1997, p.32). While comparing her with Salman Rushdie, Ramlal Agarwal asserts that the creative exploitation of Roy's English resembles with Rushdie's felicity of expression in using English (Agarwal, 1998, p. 208). Apart from Rushdie, her language innovations often analogized with James Joys and her reflection of regionalism with William Faulkner. As, the way she has used English language in her novel is strikingly different from the Standard English. She has broken the Standard English into pieces and then put all those pieces back together in a vernacular style. This break up of Standard English helps Roy to dislocate the language from its origin and relocate it in Indian soil. As a result, her English bears the touch of native Indian soil and flickers with Indian spirit, which is a defining characteristic of postcolonial English. Boehmer asserts that the novel is unmistakably postcolonial in nature and fabricates Indian variety of English by "expanding, distorting, excavating, disconcerting" Queen's English (Boehmer, 2003, p.67).

For this purpose, Roy has used the linguistic strategies of abrogation and appropriation to manipulate words, phrases, standard rules of grammar, syntactical structures, standard punctuation, and upper case letters and has incorporated prefixes and suffixes, regional socio-cultural terms and neologism to indigenize the imposed colonial tongue. As, Prabhavati (2001) asserts that the beauty of Roy's novel lies in the use of Indian English and verities of her innovative techniques. She deviates from the standard conventions of English language by using regional words and sentences, unusual capital letters, italics, sentences without subjects, misspellings, one word sentences and abnormal word order in *The God of Small things*. This demonstrates the fact that the hegemony of English language in postcolonial world can be challenged, defied and refuted through the linguistic strategies of abrogation and appropriation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to establish the argument, the researcher reviews the role of English language in colonization and its status in postcolonial world briefly, with a review of the criticism the text under study has received.

English language has sparked countless debates in postcolonial world, as it has been used by the colonizers as an imperial strategy to establish, enhance and expand their colonial domination for a long time. Britain did this in India, Nigeria and Kenya, for instance and France did it in Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco. As Wa Thiong'O asserts that economic and political control can only be complete and effective if it is accompanied by the mental control (Ngugi, 1986, p.16). Therefore, in order to gain the mental control of the natives, the colonizers have abandoned the natives' languages by declaring them poor, rude and meaningless. Which created a sense of inferiority among the natives and they lost faith in everything, including their names, their language, their culture, their traditions, their religion, their history, their education system,

and ultimately in themselves. Consequently, the colonized successfully became assimilated into the colonizers culture and came to be separated from their own culture.

However, after the independence of these colonized countries, English language has become an issue of central debate, and postcolonial writers, scholars and theorist have quite contradictory views about its use. Writers like Fanon (1967) and WaThiong'O (1986) have completely opposed its use, while majority of others have proposed a strategic resistance against the dominance of English by adapting it in their own socio-cultural contexts, in order to produce an effective counter discourse.

Therefore, these writers have taken the language of the former colonial empire and replaced it with a discourse fully able to transmit their socio-cultural realities based on the linguistic strategies of abrogation and appropriation. As, Language by nature cannot be hegemonic; it travels and changes; it is altered, domesticated and adapted in different locations and circumstances; it can be used for purposes other than what it seems to represent.

As a result, English language has lost its originality in terms of grammar, pronunciation, syntax and lexicon. Each postcolonial country has adapted it to suit its own socio-cultural needs. As Chinua Achebe says, "I feel that the English language will be able to carry the weight of my African experience. But it will have to be a new English still in full communion with its ancestral home but altered to suit new African surroundings" (As cited in Ngugi, 1987, p.8).

Similarly, Salman Rushdie in his essay *Imaginary Homelands*, comments that, English language is not something that can simply be overlooked and disregarded, as it has been done by wa Thing'O, but it is the site where writers should try to sort out the problems that challenge the emerging or recently independent colonies. He believes that by remaking a colonial language to reflect the postcolonial experience, we can conclude the process of making ourselves free from the legacies of colonialism (Rushdie, 1992, p.17).

Describing this aspect of Indian English, Kachru says that the colonial legacy which the Indians slowly accepted, and then in their typical Indian way acculturated, is the English language. The outcome of this long process of Indianization of the English language is what is now termed "Indian English" (Kachru 1976, p.225). Today for a number of reasons, English is considered as one of the Indian languages, not a language of the colonizers imposed upon Indians, but as an adapted language by the Indians. Therefore, the Indian post-colonial writer and critic Aijaz Ahmad claims that, "English is now for better or for worse, one of the Indian Languages" (Ahmed, 1997, p. 103). And Pritish Nandy (1973) blatantly termed English as an Indian language so much nativized and acculturated that it can authentically carry the burden of a typical Indian experience. He asserts that, "English is a language of our own, yes, an Indian language, in which we can feel deeply, create and convey experiences and response typically Indian" (Nandy, 1973, p.8).

Therefore, Arundhati Roy has used the English language to rebut the dominant colonial ideologies. By employing both these strategies of abrogation and appropriation in her maiden venture, *The God of Small Things*, she has not only questioned but answered back to the colonizers, who imposed every form of colonization during the colonial period including the imposition of their language. So, she abrogates the aesthetic assumption of the center and appropriates the rhythmic patterns, which may eventually affect the conventional spellings, fusing words, using more localized lexicons, coinages and neologisms, syntax and symbolic representations. Without appropriation abrogation cannot create any originality. Thus, through abrogation, Roy redesigns English and frees it from the so called rigidity of the British variety and then appropriates it to develop another variety of English which is Indian in nature and

reflects the Indian culture. Consequently, ever since its publication, Roy's novel has generated controversy and subjected to a close scrutiny of both, its admirers and detectors. However, the highly innovative use of language, spiced with abrogation and appropriation in her narration of the novel, has earned her the title, "the princess of prose" even while being denounced by its critics, labeling her as a "self-hypnotized word retailer".

In spite of these contrasting reactions, there is no doubt that Roy has remarkably indigenized the Standard English in Indian context by challenging its dominance. As she herself says that even after fifty years of independence, India is yet to overcome the colonial legacy and we are still caught up in between devil and the deep blue sea. We are still recoiling from the socio-cultural insult brought by the experience of colonization. We are still struggling to refute the colonizers' definition of us (Roy, 1997, p. 13). Her novel is, therefore a true reflection of the literature that is, "always written out of the tension between the abrogation of the received English which speaks from the center and the act of appropriation which brings it under the influence of a vernacular tongue" (Ashcroft et al, 1989, p. 39).

Thus, Roy's use of English reflects the Postcolonial writers' attempts to indigenize the Standard English, in order to examine and scrutinize the native history of the pre-colonial, colonial and postcolonial times, its spatio-temporal coordinates, its cultural shifts, its repressions and oppressions, its struggle for the subjective space and most pressingly its own unique existence. And Roy's linguistic inventiveness in *The God of Small Things* clearly indicates that it's quite possible to break up the Standard English into pieces and then put it back together vernacularly. This break up of Standard English helps Roy to dislocate the language from its origin and then relocate it on Indian soil to transmit Indian socio-cultural realities. As Surendran asserts that Roy has practically demonstrated what Narayan has said... going for a Bharat brand of English or a brand of English that very often deviates from the standard conventions" (Surendran, 2002, p. 52). Roy's indigenization has even been applauded by The Booker Committee in 1997, as Jason Cowley notes that "What judges most admired [...] was, rather her verbal exuberance: almost alone among the 106 entries Roy has her own voice her own signature" (Cowley, 1997, p. 7).

Roy has used the language as a tool to consciously decentralize and decolonize the language. The matchless power with which she has blended English language with Indian sensibility is quite remarkable. By abrogating the Queen's English, Roy appropriates it with flamboyant confidence of style, making language sing, sigh, scream, weep and grimace on her own terms (Raveendran, 1998, p.100). Praising her skillful abrogation and appropriation of language, Taisha Abraham feels that 'through collaged words, regional aphorisms, and culturally eclipsed meanings, Roy tore up the colonial roots of English language by creating her own "Locusts Stand I" (Abraham, 1998, p.102).

Therefore, the complete rejection of conventional rules of writing in *The God of Small Things* shows Roy's remarkable guts, besides talent, in the creation of a new idiom and vocabulary. She recreates English into a language that is completely Indian in nature and does not obey the conventional rules of grammar or syntax any more (Piciucco, 1999, p. 321). Speaking of her own use of language, Roy has admitted that, "language is a very reflective thing for me. I don't know the rules, so I don't know if I have broken them" (As cited in Dhawan, 1999, p. 21). Seen in the context of this self-admission, her manipulation of the English language may rightly be described as "rule-bending creativity" (Tripathi, 1999, p. 307).

Roy's free use of Malayalam in her novel, without explanatory notes or bracketed meanings, is described by Visalakshi Menon as "typical of a new style in Indo-Anglian writing,"

which reflects a new confidence in the use of the English language by Indian writers, “No longer is adherence to the Queen’s English the norm. Perhaps it is not even desirable. Regional flavours as allowed [sic] to enrich the language and those not familiar with Malayalam (in this instance) are left to discover the meanings for themselves” (Menon, 1998, p.111). Mohan Ramanan, however, is finding this “exotic orientalism” of the book as sufficient mainly to delight the western readers, comments, “Like Rushdie she ‘chutneyfies’ English by using Malayalam words, very often without explanation” (Ramanan, 1999, p.47).

Cynthia Driesen describes the attempt made by postcolonial writers to take over the language of the colonizer as an effort to express “in a language which is not their own the spirit which is their own,” thus acting “as filters of the indigenous experience.” She considers Roy’s use of untranslated words as perhaps the most arresting mode of appropriation which “forces the reader of the standard language to negotiate this encounter with the opposed cultural identity of the racial Other” (Drisen, 1999, p.369). English is de-familiarized enough by Roy to make it carry the burden of the indigenous culture by embedding Malayalam words, even untranslated ones, into the text, thereby, introducing a truth of culture into it. The process of de-centering of male domination is also believed by him as achieved through Roy’s ‘dislocated and deviant style’ (Pillai, 1999, p.91).

Roy’s successful experimentation with language in subverting the master narrator’s communication is acknowledged by Mani Meitei (1999) as one of the redeemable features of *The God of Small Things*. Meitei also finds in Roy’s writing an example of the unpunctuated feminine prose, which is professed by Virginia Woolf as the apt medium to represent women’s protean self. So even while retaining the rhythmic cadence of speech, Roy is acknowledged as redoing the syntax and sentence patterns of English by a violation of the traditional rules of grammar and punctuation. Although a writer’s right to ignore the rules and conventions of the language can be conceded as poetic license, it is only appropriate to assess the linguistic deviations in Roy’s novel as a disruption of the normal process of communication. The gap in the reader’s comprehension of the text can be filled and the deviations rendered significant by perceiving a deeper connection between the two, thereby compensating for the superficial oddity.

Similarly, the Marxist literary critic Aijaz Ahmed despite his differences with Roy’s ideology and political opinion says that, “She is the first Indian writer in English where a marvelous stylistics resource becomes available for provincial vernacular culture without any effect of exoticism or estrangement” (Ahmed, 1997, p. 103). While praising the linguistic innovation of Roy, Rosemary Dinnage has written in *The New York Review of Books* that “Roy stretches the English language in all directions” (As cited in John, 2005, p. 25).

RESEARCH METHDOLOGY

This study is analytic in nature, in which the researcher has used qualitative method to analyze the text of the novel in accordance with Ashcroft et al’s concept of abrogation and appropriation. Therefore, it is pertinent to provide an overview of the potential strategies of abrogation and appropriation, which form the critical framework of the study, as the use of these strategies have been traced from the novel understudy and analyzed in the subsequent section.

Ashcroft et al’s (2002) process of abrogation and appropriation consist of the following five main categories, namely, Glossing, Untranslated words, interlanguage, syntactic fusion and code-switching. Prior to the textual analysis, the researcher gives an explanation of these strategies based on the definitions given by these authors.

Glossing

Glossing is a term, most commonly used in cross cultural texts, in order to provide an explanation to the non-English words, either in the form of a word, clause or a sentence to reflect the cultural difference. For example, when Chinua Achebe in *Things Fall Apart* juxtaposed ‘obi’ and ‘hut’ as, “he takes him into his obi (hut).” It indicates the inadequacy of the word ‘hut’ to transmit the cultural notions associated to the Igbo word ‘obi’. Therefore, the word ‘hut’ only functions as a referent in this context.

However, glossing is less prevalent in modern cross cultural texts as it was two or three decades back. Due to the inadequacy of appropriate referents for abstract terms on the one hand and on the other it becomes a sort of impediment in the smooth movement of plot, as in case of glossing the writer has to accommodate the explanatory machinery in the text (Ashcroft et al, 2002).

Untranslated Words

Postcolonial writers’ use of certain lexical items from their native languages in their works, to reflect the cultural difference is termed as untranslated words. It may also be termed as transliterated word, written in italics usually and without providing any translation or glossing. However, it does not only highlight the cultural difference but also transport the readers beyond the text into the cultures of their use, as the readers have to guess their meaning from the context. As, Khalid Hussani’s novel *A Thousands Splendid Suns* based in Afghanistan, is an exquisite example. In which the writer has incorporated innumerable Pashto, Arabic and Persian words to reflect the socio-cultural realities of Afghan society.

Interlanguage

Interlanguage is a term used by Nemser (1971) and Selinker (1972) for the combination of linguistic structure of two languages, in order to describe the distinct linguistic system used by the learner of the second language. As Brown describes it, that Interlanguage refers to the separateness of a second language learners system, a system that has a structurally intermediate status between the native and the target language (Brown, 2001, p.215).

Such as the work of Amos Tutuola reflects this:

I am palm-wine drunkard since I was a boy of ten years of age. I had no work other than to drink palm-wine in my life. In those days we did not know other money except COWRIES, so that everything was very very cheap, and my father was the richest man in town. (Tutuola as cited in Ashcroft et al, 2002)

This distinct linguistic structure of Tutuola has got diverse response. On the one hand it was appreciated by the English critics as a post Joycean exercise in neologism while on the other African critics have rejected it on the basis of its inaccurate and plagiaristic representation of folk tales.

However, for Nemser, the learner language is an “approximate system” which is different from both the source language and the target language. As Selinker puts it that Interlanguage is a natural outcome of the interference of the source language into the target language. Therefore, it’s not a result of mistakes or deviations rather it’s due to the separate linguistic logic that operates behind it. When these forms of language operate in literature, they create a “potent metamorphic mode” in cross-cultural writings.

Syntactic Fusion

Syntactic Fusion is basically the syntactical fusion of indigenous language with the lexical forms of English or vice versa. As the passages from John Kasaipalova's unpublished novel reflects this:

... That was when their boss saw them. He gave a very loud yell and followed with bloody swearing. But our waiter friends didn't take any notice. Our beer presents had already full up their heads and our happy singing had graped their hearts.... Man, man, *em gutpela pasin moa ya! Maski boss!* Everybody was having good time, and the only thing that spoiled the happiness was that there was not the woman in the bar to make it happier. (John Kasaipalova as cited in Ashcroft et al, 2002)

Here, the use of noun as verb, "full up their heads"; metonymic use of adjectives, "bloody swearing"; the use of double comparatives, "more happier" and the use of plurals, "swearing" and "singings", as the statements of communal involvement are the outcome of the syntactic influence of Melanesian *tok pisin* and the syntactic tendencies of the vernacular languages of Papua New Guinea. Similarly, the syntactic variations are higher in multilingual societies.

In postcolonial literatures, writers' lexical innovations and neologism are the particular forms of syntactic fusion.

Code-Switching

In postcolonial literatures, switching between two or more codes in the process of abrogating the Standard English and appropriating it as a culturally distinct entity, termed as code-switching.

Majority of the postcolonial writer use this strategy in their works, their choice of a particular language code on an occasion is an indication that the selected code is the most appropriate for that occasion. As, Khalid Hussani has used the various types of code switching i.e. inter-sentential, intra-sentential and intra-word in his novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns* in order to reflect the socio-cultural significance of Afghan society.

Similarly, the Australian novelist Joseph Murphy (cited in Ashcroft et al, 2002) makes superb use of code switching in his novel *Such Is Life*. In which he brought together a lot of variants to reflect that the language itself is a changing phenomenon.

Although a number of other theorists such as Kachru (1992) have identified some other strategies of abrogation and appropriation, the present research work is based on the strategies rendered by Ashcroft et al (2002).

RESULT AND ANALYSIS

Employing the strategies of abrogation and appropriation determined in the previous section, here the researcher offers analysis of the novel, in which Roy abrogates the Standard English to challenge the linguistic inheritance of the British colonialism and appropriates to express her postcolonial experiences. In this process of abrogation and appropriation Roy has twisted, stretched, pulled out, mangled Standard English and made it pregnant with connotations that are very different from Standard variety. With the extensive use of Malayalam words and expressions, Roy firmly establishes the novel in the soil of Kerala. The regional flavor of Kerala even further enhanced by Roy's topographical descriptions of Ayemennem landscape, its weather and the pride of Ayemennem, namely the Meenachal River with its verities of fish locally known as "pallathi," "paral," "korrri" and "karimeen" (Roy, 1997, p.203). While the spell

bound graphic descriptions of Kathakali, along with Malayalam folk and film songs delicately represent the beauty of native culture.

However, the researcher focuses only on the following strategies of abrogation and appropriation rendered by Ashcroft et al (2002).

Glossing

Taking into consideration Roy's vernacularization of English, the researcher will start with glossed Malayalam words and expressions which are interspersed in the textual landscape of the novel. Glossing is one of the most common strategies used in cross cultural texts, in order to provide an explanation to the non-English words, either in the form of word, clause or a sentence to reflect the cultural difference and reassert the writer's identity. Roy has deliberately used words and expressions of Malayalam that are glossed for the non-Malayalee readers throughout the novel. These glossed words and expressions may include terms of address, items of clothing, food and reference to religion, among other things and can further be divided into italicized and non-italicized ones. The italicized ones give a clear indication of the other language, or writer's native tongue and pose no difficulty for the non-Malayalee readers. Despite the fact that Roy has juxtaposed or placed side by side their English equivalents, and even provided self-explanatory notes wherever they are required, these words still reflect their socio-cultural orientations. Such italicized words are, "Punnyan Kunju, which means Little Blessed One" (p.23), "chhi-chii poach and in Hindi means shit-wiper" (p.50), "themmady kuzhy, which means the pauper's pit, the place where the police routinely dump their dead" (p.304), and "Chappu Thamburan, Velutha called him. Lord Rubbish" (p.320).

Roy has also glossed the direct speech in the native language; however, its use is only restricted to the fateful night of Velutha's brutal torture, when one of the policemen asks, "Madiyo?" and the rejoinder is, "Madi aayirikkum." Which promptly translated by the narrator as, "Enough? Enough" (p.310). Further, at the closing pages of *The God of Small Things*, Roy has used "Naaley." means "Tomorrow." (p.320) to emphasize the futility of Ammu's hope.

While the non-italicized words, though few in numbers, are interspersed in the texture of English and convey more than their English equivalents. These words include examples like, "Ammukutty. Little Ammu." (p. 175), "Modalali in Malayalam means landlord." (p.80), "Kochu Thomban (Little Tusker)" (p.154) and "Akkara, which means The other side." (p.196), "Mon" means boy and "Mol" means girl (p.60) and "Onner. Rounder. Moonner" (p.64), meaning "one, two and three" (p.64) respectively.

Besides these, Roy has also glossed some words in reversed order. This seems to be an intentional attempt to reverse the positions accorded to both the languages. Usually, a native word is used with glossing of an English equivalent, such as, "Ammukutty. Little Ammu" (p.175). However, in these examples, "Emperors of the Realm of Taste" (p. 46), juxtaposed with Malayalam translation as "Ruchi lokathinde Rajavu" (p. 46) and "It was a boat. A tiny wooden vallom" (p. 202). Here, the writer has used the English words in the first place and then to emphasize the meanings, attached to them, native language is being used. It indicates that the English words lack, what "Ruchi lokathinde Rajavu" and "A tiny wooden vallom" conveys.

Un-Translated Words

Another strategy of abrogation and appropriation of Standard English is the use of un-translated words and expressions of the native languages, which used to reflect the cultural difference. They may also be termed as transliterated words, usually written in italics and without any

translation and glossing. Roy has extensively knitted the Malayalam words and expressions into the English fabric of *The God of Small Things* to convey truth of the Indian culture and myths.

A close analysis of these un-translated words reveal that Roy has used quite frequently Malayalee kinship terms like “Kochamma,” “Pappachi” and “Mammachi”, while referring to the characters of Baby, Chako’s ex-wife Margaret, Benaan Ipe and his wife Soshamma respectively. Similarly certain other relationships like “Chachen,” “Chetan and Cheduthi,” “Ammaven,” “Appoi and Ammai” (p. 37), and “Ammachi” are left unexplained and unglossed. As, these kinship terms have their own emotional connotations and used in a particular language are largely specific to that very language and society where they are spoken. But their use in English is quite meaningful because as social markers, they confirm their specificity to the local setting of the novel and significantly reassert the socio-cultural identity of the writer. Moreover, unlike the usual practice among the postcolonial writers, Roy has not italicized these Malayalam words; rather she has treated them as that of English. Therefore, these terms get additional importance by the fact that they not only highlight the difference between cultures but also point to the ineffectiveness of English language in conveying the intimate feelings associated with these regional terms.

Other un-translated Malayalam words through which Roy has adulterated the fabric of English are related to the regional dressing and ornaments such as “mundu” (p.14), “chatta” (p. 170), “mundu and kavani” (p. 270), and “kunukku earrings” (p. 30). Malayalee food items like “chakka vilaichathu” (p.138), “kappa and meen vevichathu” (p. 140), “idi appams ... kanji and meen” (p. 210), and “avalose oondas” (p.273) has also received similar treatment in the novel. As they belong to the Indian cuisine with a characteristic native variety. Words like “chenda” (p.192), “koojah” (p.209), and “mittam” (p.219) are also used without providing any typographical or textual difference. It reflects not only the self assertiveness of the oppressed culture, just as the surrounding English words reflect their colonial origin but also presents a form of resistance against the marginalization of native tongues. Furthermore, it compels the western readers to know more about the subcontinent cultures.

However, Roy has italicized the rest of the un-translated Malayalam words to indicate their non-English status. “Veshyas” is the first native word that occurs in the novel in italicized form, when after the funeral of Sophie Mol, Ammu along with Rahel and Estha went to the Kottayam Police Station to rectify the mistake regarding Velutha. However, Inspector Mathew, the incharge of Kottayam Police Station refused to listen and told her that, “the police knew all they needed to know and that the Kottayam Police didn’t take statements from Veshyas or their illegitimate children” (p. 8).

The other words include “Aiyyo, Mon! Mol!” (p.208), “Poda Patti!” (p.90), “Sundarikuuty” (p.179), “Kushumbi” (p.185), “Chacko Saar vannu” (p.171), “Eda cherukka!” (p.101), “Aiyyo kashtam” (p.177). While, Malayalam slogans are also reproduced in the novel by Roy. When, during a rally, the readers are introduced to Velutha, “holding a red flag” (p.66) and shouting the slogans for his rights, as
“Inquilab Zindabad!
Thozhilali Ekta Zindabad!” (p. 66)

Syntactic Fusion

Roy’s abrogation and appropriation of English is not only limited to the lexical levels. She has completely discarded the established rules of morphology, syntax and sentence structures of English.

Roy's morphological abrogation of English has resulted in the creation of such linguistically odd structures as "getting-outedness" (p.172), which is used to refer the action of getting out of a car, is comparable to the structure of "preparedness" or the state of being prepared. Similarly "Stoppited" (p.141) is repeatedly used in the place of "stopped it," by discarding the intervening pause between "stop" and "it" as "Stoppit" (p.141).

Furthermore, the coinage of ironical adjective "die-able" based on the model of "changeable," is used by the writer for the tragic death of Ammu, who has violated the established socio-cultural norms of the society and ultimately is being punished. Moreover, in the context this word has the added advantage of rhyming with "viable" in the phrase "a viable die-able age" (p.3). A coinage like "afternoon-mare" (p.217) is formed on the pattern of "nightmare," reflects, on the one hand, limitation of the English language to communicate and on the other provides logical grounds for further experimentation on the basis of the regional languages' morphological structures. Numerous such examples are to be found interspersed within the pages of the novel, in which Roy has challenged the morphological structure of English.

In the same manner, Roy has abrogated and appropriated the syntactical structure of sentences in *The God of Small Things*. When describing the reaction of "Foreign Returnees," (p.140) to the dust filled shabbiness of Cochin Airport, in the following ungrammatical statement, "Oho! Going to the dogs India is" (p.140), Roy has infused the native flavour of the situation into the textual fabric of English language. Similarly, Comrade Pillai's English is invariably characterized by the Malayalee flavor, when he asks the grown up Rahel, after her return from America with native curiosity, "I think so you are in Amayrica now?" (p.129) and then on the same manner jumps to the highly personal and sensitive topic of bearing children, is, "One is must. Boy girl. Anyone. Two is of course your choice" (p.130).

At another occasion, he explains to Chacko, the reason behind his absence from home as, "My sister Sudha met with fracture sometime back. So I took her to Olassa Moos for some medications. Some oils and all that. Her husband is in Patna, so she is alone at in-laws' place" (p.274). The narrator humorously comments, "as though Fracture were a visiting dignitary." Although, the incorrect grammar of these sentences does not pose any difficulty in comprehension, its use clearly reflects a deliberate violations of the traditional rules of English grammar by the writer, to show the transformation of English language in the postcolonial world. Consequently, it can be said that Roy's English in *The God of Small Things* very often follows the syntactical structures of sub continental languages.

Code-Switching and Vernacular Transcription

Code-switching and vernacular transcription is another device of abrogation and appropriation of English in the postcolonial literatures. Postcolonial writers use it to change the mode of expression in accordance with their socio-cultural contexts. Roy has also used different types of code-switching, such as inter-sentential and intra-sentential in *The God of Small Things* to blur the boundaries of English with Malayalam.

Inter-Sentential Code-Switching

The novel has a sustained use of inter-sentential code-switching, when the narrator switches from one language to another between different sentences. Roy, instead of giving only a translation of popular Malayalam folk and film songs, prefers to switch code and provides the verses in vernacular transcription first and then translates them into English. Such as, the rough lines of

the boat song that Estha sings in the pickle factory are provided in the native language besides the parenthetical translation in English:

Enda da korangacha, chandi ithra thenjadu?
(Hey Mr Monkey man, why's your bum so
red?) ...
(p.196).

Later on, Roy has used the same technique to represent scatological rhyme, which the paralyzed Kuttappen repeated shouts in his description:

Pa pera-pera-pera-perakka
(Mr gugga-gug-gug-guava,)
Ende parambil thooralley.
(Don't shit here in my compound.) ...
(p.206).

Similarly, Roy has provided the parenthetical translation of popular Malayalam film song by Ammu and her twins while listening on the radio in English, with contextual reference:

Pandoru mukkuvan muthinu poyi,
(Once a fisherman went to sea,)
Padinjaran kattathu mungi poyi,
(The West Wind blew and swallowed his boat,) ...
Arayathi pennu pizhachu poyi,
(His wife on the shore went astray,)...
Avaney kadalamma kondu poyi.
(So Mother Ocean rose and took him away.)
(p.219-20).

Here, Roy deliberately uses the vernacular transcription as a strategy to rip the dominance of English apart and reflect her native cultural connotations.

In sharp contrast to other postcolonial writers, Roy sometimes switches code from English to Malayalam, without providing any explanatory notes or bracketed meaning. Particularly, Comrade Pillai, constantly switches from Malayalam to English and vice versa. Such as, addressing the Rahel, he directly says, "Ayyo, Rahel Mol! ... Orkunniley?" (p.128) and "Orkunnundo?" (p.134), while "Ayyo paavam" (p.131) is used by Pillai to show his false concern with Estha's condition. This reflects the socio-cultural connotations of special intimacy that is not possible in English. Similarly, the use of "Edi Kalyani" (p.273), "Allay edi, Kalyani?" (p.278), "Ende Deivomay! Eee sadhanangal!" (p.143) not only reflects a close intimacy but lend a touch of regionalism to the novel.

Intra-Sentential Code-Switching

There are several examples in which Roy switches from one language to another within the same sentence. Thus a sentence will be made up of two or more languages. For example, when the family was on their way to receive Sophie Mol and her mother at Cochin Airport, they struck in a Communist rally and one of the marchers caught the bonnet of their car in rage, but left it without damaging it, Chacko says, "Thanks, keto!... Valarey thanks!" (p.70). similarly, when Chacko visits Comrade Pillai's house, he asks his son Lenin to meet, "Comrade Uncle" (p.128).

Estha often repeats the lines from Julius Caesar, to tease Kochu Maria as, "Et tu? Kochu Maria? – Then fall Estha! And die again" (p.83). Whereas, Comrade Pillai when he sees Rahel after her return from America, asks her, "I think so you are in Amayrica now?" (p.129).The

infusion of two languages into a single sentence, in the above quoted examples, clearly reflects Roy's abrogation and appropriation of English language in *The God of Small Things*.

CONCLUSION

The study of the novel carried out so far suggests that Roy has used abrogation and appropriation as a significant tool in her novel, through which she has indigenized English language in order to re-assert her socio-cultural identity and represent peculiarly Indian cultural ethos and linguistic atmosphere. She has deliberately defied all the conventional rules of correct usage in *The God of Small Things* and fused the fabric of English language with sub continental vocabulary, idioms, collocations and mannerism. As a result, her novel reflects the true spirit of postcolonial literature, which challenges the colonial legacies in one way or the other. The Booker Committee has declared, "Roy as an architect in literary circle molding language in all shapes and sizes as was never done before at least in the Indian literary context" (As cited in Surendran, 2002).

It is therefore, safe to conclude that Arundhati Roy's novel is a milestone in the indigenization of English in postcolonial Indian English Fiction in which she imbibes the characteristics of Indian culture with a spirit of resistance in order to reclaim her land, her language, her history and the memories of pre-colonial era. Thus, it can be said that the excellence of *The God of Small Things* lies apart from its thematic perspective, in its use of language that is English in letter but Indian in spirit.

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