

## Appropriation in Shazaf Fatima's novel and how it happened?

Maria Khosa<sup>1,\*</sup>, Sadia Bano<sup>1</sup>, Durdana Khosa<sup>2</sup>, Mehwish Malghani<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences (BUIEMS), Quetta, Pakistan

<sup>2</sup>Sardar Bahadur Khan (SBK) Women's University, Quetta, Pakistan

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**Abstract:** The current study aims to explore the techniques of language appropriation through the lens of post colonialism employed by Pakistani icon Shazaf Fatima Haider in her novel, "How it happened". Post-colonial literature has distinguished features of abrogation and appropriation which the post-colonial natives use as a weapon to counterattack the monopoly of colonizers. Appropriation has been defined as a process which alters the language of the center to express the 'differing cultural experiences'. It is also perceived as a revolutionary strategy of self-empowerment to represent one's own tradition, culture and identity to the world. The analysis is done through a list of strategies proposed by Kachru (1983) and Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin (2002). Post-colonial writers adapt and appropriate English to produce creative works. In postcolonial texts, un-translated words, glossing, intertextuality, syntactic fusion, lexical innovation, translation equivalent, contextual redefinition, tag-switching and code-switching specify that the writing of the text is in an 'other' language. Moreover, the present study also discovers a new linguistic strategy of appropriation not given by the aforementioned theorists. The analyses prove that the author has employed all the strategies of appropriation and has infused the Pakistani terms with culture specific connotations in English language with finesse. The study corroborates that Post-colonial writers in general and Pakistani writers in particular adopt these strategies in order to bring to the forefront the rich culture and heritage of this part of South Asia.

**Key words:** *Post colonialism; Pakistani literature; Language appropriation; cultural heritage*

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### 1. Introduction

This paper examines the rejection of a Standard English language by the post-colonial writers to show to the world that they are not only physically decolonized but mentally as well. Such denial is the proof that they are living entity of an independent nation. They have their own past, culture, language, identity and religion. Language is the backbone and an essential foundation of any culture. Language transports culture, and culture in turn transfers the whole bulk of values through which we come to distinguish ourselves and our place in the world (James Currey, 1986). Language is the symbol of one's identity. As Fanon says once this way of perceiving identity is challenged Colonialism sees its destruction. Whether it is oral or written language is the main source of communication where the speaker shares his thoughts, feelings, emotions and ideas with the receiver. Throughout the history it's been the main weapon by which the colonizers subjugated the colonized nations. As Mac. Leod (2000) opines, the rule of British Empire did not depend on military and physical force only. It made both colonizing and colonized people to perceive their world and themselves in a specific way, adopting the language of Empire, as representative of the true and natural order of life.

Post-colonial literature specifically revolves around the social, political and economic problems

and consequences of the formerly subjugated and decolonized nations. It is a counter discourse of the writers who belong to the colonized countries that were deprived of their fundamental rights. Postcolonial literature shares the characteristic of rejecting colonial languages by introducing local languages in the artistic work. In their attempt the post-colonial writers use the technique of abrogation and appropriation to re-place the imperial language with the local discourse. Under the theoretical framework of Kachru (1983) and Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin (2002) literary artists in postcolonial sphere went on to use abrogation and appropriation to pose a challenge to the sidelining of local sentiments and to verify the claim that they are mentally decolonized. *Abrogation* is the complete refusal of the imperial culture's burden. In this process of abrogation, the literary scholars and writers appropriate English to express the emotions of the native. By employing this technique they incorporated their local words having specific connotations in the language of colonials that is English. *Appropriation* is the process by which the language is taken and made to bear the burden of the native cultural experience.

In this study, the researchers used Kachru (1983) and Ashcroft et al. (2000) textual strategies to examine how the Pakistani novelist Shazaf Fatima Haider has utilized such strategies in expressing native ideologies and sentiments. The purpose of the

author is “to convey in a language that is not one's own the spirit that is one's own” (Rao, 1938, p. vii).

English remains a *lingua franca* throughout the history of colonization and has been imposed on the colonized people by the use of state apparatuses, like education. This foreign language was systematically employed by the colonizers in schools and work places as a medium of instruction and means of communication respectively. In an invaded colony, where the colonizers impose their language and try to secure hegemony over the native *lingua franca* through cultural and artistic productions, members of the community are always marginalized in every aspect specially language.

The colonial involvement in the subcontinent left ineradicable marks on the languages and cultures of both the colonizer and the colonized. This experience has been notably theorized by Bhabha (1994) and thoroughly debated since that time. The advent of colonization, and with it the inception of the post imperial age followed by globalization through the United Nations led to increasing interdependence of countries of the world largely owing to world trade agreements, consequently English (and other colonialist languages) went on to create a huge change throughout the world which was cultural and economic both at the same time (Awan& Ali, 2012).

In reply to these changes and happenings, some postcolonial writers like Ngugi (1986) went completely against the usage of colonial languages for cultural manifestations or academic purposes. He took a major step and considered English as a ‘means of spiritual subjugation’ and imperial supremacy. On the contrary, writers like Wole Soyinka encouraged writing back to the Empire (Awan& Ali, 2012).

The process of appropriation and abrogation results in new English. Post- colonialism is an era where the imperial master narrative received a response as a counter narrative of resistance by the colonized. The under study novel is debut novel set in a contemporary Pakistani Shia society that stereotypes women. Her work provides a window through which the adaptation of English in expressing native local sentiments can be perceived. Imbued with local color matrimony is the main theme of this light hearted comedy. Further, the author of this secondary narrative type is Pakistani Shia woman who is aware of her identity and seeks to regain her culture and lost identity. Identity is something which makes us conscious of our worth in this world. For this reason, the post-colonial writers appropriate English to their own use and ease in order to maintain their identity and worth in this global village. Similarly, the fusion of Pakistani culture and Urdu language in the English writing in expressing the indigenous themes mark the success of this novel.

For this reason, many postcolonial writers devise linguistic strategies to prove it to the world specifically the colonialists that their language is theirs no more. Furthermore, the different strategies of abrogation and appropriation result in many

varieties of English; and a blend of local language with the foreign language produces a creative work. This fusion of the two languages demonstrates that the writing of the text in an ‘other’ language. Furthermore, a new linguistic strategy has been discovered by the researchers, which are ‘Echo words’ which is a clear proof that Urdu vocabulary has pervaded into the English language.

The understudy novel examines that how Pakistani female writer Shazaf Fatima Haider appropriates English by using the linguistic strategies devised by Kachru (1983) and Ashcroft et al. (2002). Further, she uses a new strategy of Echo words to bring on the surface her own native sentiments, culture and identity.

The aim of this paper is two-fold. First, this paper aimed to identify the technique of appropriation in the novel, “How it happened” by Shazaf Fatima Haider. Second, it also aimed to analyze how the strategies of appropriation were used to adapt English language to expressing native culture, longing, desires, emotions and sentiments. The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To analyze the language appropriation techniques employed by Shazaf Fatima Haider in, ‘How it happened’.

3. To find the native Pakistani sentiments using appropriation techniques in, ‘How it happened’.

## 2. Literature review

Language is the main tool through which the West exerts influence on the East. The imperial education system sets up a standard version of English as the model and marginalizes all local dialects. Such power is rejected with the advent of post-colonial voice. The author of the under study novel is post-colonial Pakistani voice who is aware of her identity and seeks to reclaim her lost traditional, social and cultural uniqueness through the infusion of local vocabulary in the text.

Appropriation is an important tool through which the language of the center is replaced in order to convey the divergent ethnic and traditional practices (Ashcroft et al, 2002). In addition, it shapes the language of the center in a form of discourse completely adjusted to the colonized place. Abrogation and appropriation for Zebus (2007) are intended tactics of adopting the policy of decolonization where ‘writing with an accent’ brings forth conceptual differences.

According to Shevchuk (2009) a counter narrative of resistance is created by the colonized as a response to the assimilationist policies of the imperial center.

Similarly, in post-colonial Philippine short stories by ArguillaQuinto and Santos (2016) analyzed the content and the themes of the four short stories and brought to the surface the local Filipino voice and sentiments through the medium of abrogation and appropriation.

Omoniyi (2009) classifies two schools of thought relating to the growth/expansion of English (es). The first one termed as, Manfred Gorrach School of English World-Wide (EWW) that centers on the essence of nonconformity of the varieties of the language from local speakers and the second one is called as Kachru School of 'World English (WE) that assigns a political and ideological angle to the expansion of English, its indigenization and appropriation. Shazaf Fatima's technique of linguistic appropriation is linked to the later school of thought as she endeavors to appropriate the invaders language which had ideological and political motives in end.

Some postcolonial writers like Ngugi (1986) consider colonial languages 'a cultural bomb' and a course to spiritual servility and imperial authority. Keeping this purpose in mind, authors like Wole Soyinka stood up for the cause of writing back to the Empire.

Achebe's revolutionary linguistic experimentation caused English to be adjusted, modified, appropriated and transformed into several diverse languages by the postcolonial innovative writers. In this respect, the significant works of writers such as, Sidhwa, Rushdie, Ngugi, Khushwant Singh, Khaled Hosseini, Arundhati Roy, Shazaf Fatima Haider and others have made great mark in the history. Local languages got their separate status because of the persistent struggle of these writers. African-American Vernacular English (AAVE) or Ebonics can be a good example in this regard that was considered an adulterated form of American English earlier but lately is made acceptable and is deemed as developed as other established languages of the world (Fasold, 1999; Loudon, 2000).

A number of varying approaches of appropriation brought to existence different varieties of 'English'. Some postcolonial writers attempted at fusing the linguistic structures of two languages hence, producing an 'inter-culture' a term devised by Nemes and Selinker (as cited in Ashcroft et al, 2002). Moreover, an amalgam of native language grammar with the word forms of English is also commonly witnessed in postcolonial writings. Together with these, code-switching is another most repeated method of appropriation employed by the writers (Ashcroft et al, 2002). Besides the aforementioned methods, Kachru (1983) categorized some other strategies of appropriation such as, translation equivalence, lexical innovations, contextual redefinition and rhetorical and functional styles.

### 3. Methodology

Qualitative research paradigm has been used in this descriptive textual analysis of the novel, 'How it happened' by Shazaf Fatima Haider keeping in view Kachru (1983) and Ashcroft et al. (2002) textual strategies of appropriation. The strategies are:

1. Untranslated words,
2. Syntactic fusion,

3. Lexical innovation,
4. Echo words
5. Tag switching or indigenous discourse markers
6. Code-Switching
7. Glossing
8. Contextual Redefinition or Kinship terms
9. Translation Equivalence
10. Indigenous phonetic pronunciation

### 4. Theoretical framework

Kachru (1983) and Ashcroft et al. (2002) textual strategies in postcolonial writing provide a framework for the present study. Textual strategies denote the writer's usage of linguistic structure of the borrowed language and the writer's handling of the said language's semantics and syntactical structure in order to convey his view point hence, challenging the colonizer (Ashcroft, Griffith & Tiffin, 1989). Abrogation and Appropriation are the techniques commonly used among these textual strategies. Moreover, Ashcroft et al. (2002) opine that abrogation is the intentional molding of English language, done in order to reveal the structures of the local languages. Through the use of appropriation the language in question is adapted as a device and employed in innumerable ways to define broadly divergent traditional practices. It seizes the language of the center and utilizes it in a discourse fully adapted to the colonized place. The present study endeavors to highlight and analyze the appropriation strategies employed by the author in her work "How it happened".

Kachru (1983) and Ashcroft et al. (2002) identify at least nine language appropriation strategies:

The first approach in appropriation technique is termed as glossing, it is an explanatory comment affixed to a text. It can be a word, a sentence, or a clause, characterizing the non-English word. The second approach is the incorporation of untranslated words or leaving words un-glossed, it aims to keep the cultural uniqueness intact. The third one is termed as syntactic fusion, which is the amalgamation of two different linguistic structures, resulting in mixing the syntax of native language with the lexical forms of English, or vice versa. Fourthly, the usage of translation equivalence permits the writer to incorporate the local opinions and insights into a foreign language. In lexical innovation the words are borrowed from local languages and incorporated into the New English. The post-colonial writers use it as a means to describe new experiences, sounds and tastes they come across. Contextual redefinition provides a way to introduce new vocabulary words. Finally, code switching is the technique of moving between two or more codes to bring variation in the ways of expression.

In accordance with Kachru (1983) and Ashcroft et al. (2002) framework on postcolonial writing, this paper examines textual strategies found in "How it Happened" by Shazaf Fatima Haider and analyzes

how native sentiments are molded and presented in an appropriated form of English.

#### 4.1. Analysis

Qualitative textual analysis reveals that, almost all strategies of appropriation have been used except interlanguage, rhetorical and functional style. Moreover, the author made extensive use of new strategy of appropriation that is echo words. It is also important here to mention that the un-translated lexical terms are either cultural expressions or kinship words.

#### 4.2. Glossing

It is a descriptive statement affixed to a text. It can be in a form of word, a sentence or a clause, giving an explanation for the non-English word (Awan & Ali, 2012).

Deliberate use of glossing shows that the author wants her readers to be cognizant with the culture meaning of the words. The technique of glossing is manifested in religious words, musical instruments and words used in everyday conversations.

- Gulawat (when the bride's brother marries the sister of the groom) (p. 49)
- Istikhara is god's way of telling you whether something is ill-omened or not. (p.68)
- Nagorichurail! That clever witch" (p. 80)
- Phoonkification or blowing (p. 23)
- Sehra, a curtain of roses covering my face (p. 92)
- "Hoor" "as celestial metaphors went..." (p. 95)
- Moharram, the month when Shias were supposed to forget the world to remember the trials and martyrdom of Imam Hussain. (p.191)
- Baithak or sit in (p.257)

In the examples cited above the use of "or" shows the writer's attempt at explaining or introducing her culture directly. Juxtaposing the words in this way suggests the view that the meaning of a word is its referent.

#### 4.3. Untranslated word

When the words are left un-translated in a text, it indicates that the text is written in an 'other' language. This device is more commonly used for conveying the sense of cultural identity and uniqueness.

- 'Ye ShadiNahiHogee!(p.16)
- Ghar-damaad (p.15)
- Purdha (p.20)
- Kyunkesaasbhikabhibahuthi. (p.39)
- Sheesh-naagan (p.45)
- Badmaash (p.27)
- Na Baba (p. 78)

#### 4.4. Syntactic fusion

The amalgamation of two linguistic structures results in syntactic fusion. The mixing of the syntax

of local language with foreign language creates a new strategy that is syntactic fusion.

- Dilkatukras and kalayjees- piece of her heart and liver respectively. (p. 99)
- Larki-wallahs (p.71)
- Of courses (p.77)
- Dhol-wallahs and dhol- wallahs (p.97)
- Kameezes p. 98
- Dadiness (p.119)
- Imams (p.232)
- Salaamed (p.275)
- Sawabs (p.293)
- A maatham-ing husband (295)

She makes use of plurals by adding "s" or "ing" at the end of the urdu words like ghararas (p.188), maslas (p.85), dhabas (p.185).

#### 4.5. Code-switching

The most regular method of marking dissimilarity in the process of appropriation is the art of shifting between two or more codes (Ashcroft, 2002). The shifting from English language to the native language(s) of the region is the technique of code switching. Kachru (1983) observes that code-switching is employed as a marker of attitude, emotional intensity, or various types of identities.

- Haan, I was in the garden, full of motia. (p.03)
- Lota in bathroom (p.14)
- What if he gets married to a gori (p.21)
- Not even a white one ... but a kali. (p.25)

#### 4.6. Translation equivalence

The usage of translation equivalence lets the writer to instill the local views and ideologies in a foreign language. It is the factual translation of how the Pakistanis use words to express themselves.

- How my heart goes out to my poor cousin. (p. 25)
- No chest and hips like watermelons. (p.41)
- Our stars did not meet. (p.44)
- Your head will feel cool. (p. 81)

#### 4.7. Lexical innovation

Here the words are borrowed from local languages and incorporated into the New English. The post-colonial writers use it as a means to describe new experiences, sounds and tastes they come across.

- Haram meat (p.22)
- Dhol player (p.116)
- Aloo ghost gravy (p.220)
- Namehram men (p.244)
- Chutney dish (p. 148)
- Silly Baccha (p.242)

#### 4.8. Contextual redefinition

Contextual redefinition introduces new vocabulary words which indicate heartfelt respect

and veneration existing in the indigenous Pakistani society. Shazaf Haider's intentional incorporation of kinship expressions is an effort to show emotional attachment among family members in Pakistan.

For example, she uses the expression *abbu* for father (p.11), *saas* for mother-in-law (p.39), *phuppo* for paternal aunt (p.11), *dadi* for paternal grandmother (p.11), *apa* (p.60) and *baji* (p.17) for elder sister. *Nawab* (p.62) is a title usually refers to males; the primary duty of a *Nawab* is to maintain the administration of a certain province.

#### **4.9. Indigenous discourse markers or tag switching**

It refers to the insertion of a tag in any language and is used to administer the movement of conversation without assigning any major meaning to the speech. They are particular to the language and the culture in which they are spoken. The examples for tag-switch in the novel are as follows:

- Alllllllaaaaaaah! (p.23)
- Haw Hai! (p.33)
- Eww! Toba toba! (p.44)
- Laloo! (p.53)
- Ha- ray- Baap! (p.91)
- AreyBibi (p.251)

#### **4.10. Indigenous phonetic pronunciation**

Appropriation of the pronunciation of the Standard English according to one's regional dialect in oral and written discourse both is called Indigenous phonetic pronunciation. For example, in the selected novel

She skewered the fustpozeetion in English lee-ray- ture. (p.49)

Similarly, *Amreekan* (p.25) and *Amreeka* (p.282) are the regional pronunciation of American and America respectively.

#### **4.11. Major finding**

##### **4.11.1. Echo words**

Researchers have identified one new interesting strategy in the selected novel that is the echo words strategy which has not been mentioned by Kachru (1983) and Ashcroft et al. (2002).

Echo word is a linguistic term that denotes a specific kind of reverberation which is used to emphasize important ideas or to develop coherence among sentences. In the languages of South Asia its usage is very common. An extensive use of echo words is found in the novel which is a clear proof of local and cultural identity. For example,

- Love-shove (p.11)
- McDonalds-shuck Donnels (p.22)
- Affairs-shaffairs (p.30)
- Boy-friend-shoy-friends (p.33)
- Kissing-shissing, datine-shating, books-shooks (p.34)

- Romance-shomance, enough-shenuf (p.35)
- Dowry-showry, coffee-shofee (p.37)
- Meet-sheet, checkup- sheckups (p.67)
- Shoes-woos, pool-shool, look- shook (p.79)

#### **4.11.2. Findings and conclusion**

The study examines how Shazaf Fatima Haider practices linguistic strategies to achieve the task of introducing her readers with the Urdu terminology. She proves herself in suffusing Urdu vocabulary into the text to bring the language of the subaltern on the surface.

The researcher has used seven strategies of abrogation and appropriation devised by Kachru (1983) and Ashcroft et al. (2002). These strategies are: glossing, un-translated words, syntactic fusion, code-switching, lexical innovation, translation equivalence and contextual redefinition. Whereas, other two strategies like indigenous phonetics pronunciation and Indigenous discourse markers characterized by Awan and Ali (2012) have also been employed by Shazaf Fatima Haider respectively. Further, according to the findings of the present study a new strategy 'Echo Words' has also been incorporated by Shazaf Fatima Haider.

As a whole, the writer has proved herself as a postcolonial writer by using linguistic strategies in her novel "How it happened". She successfully represented her religious, cultural, and regional distinctiveness to the world. Through her novel she selects English to depict Pakistani society and culture keeping in view an international audience. Moreover, her attempt to appropriate English also leads her to enhance English language with new linguistic items.

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