

## APPROPRIATION OF LANGUAGE IN *TWILIGHT IN DELHI*

Zainab Akram and Dr. Alia Ayub

“No candle burns upon my grave  
Nor blows a drooping rose;  
And no moth burns its wings in the flame  
Nor the bulbul sings his woes”.

(Ali, 2007, p. 227)

### ABSTRACT

*English, which emerged as a colonial language is now the lingua franca of the world. In a colonized country like Pakistan, English has dominated and enjoyed the rank of official language even after the independence. It is rightly said that the British have gone but are successful in keeping their hegemony through their language. The colonial language has subjugated the undertakings of the subcontinent and dominated other native languages. The present study tries to explain the concept of the Twilight in Delhi, written by an Asian author, who intend to prove that the condition in language adaptation and adoption in Pakistan was not miserable. The author of the novel possesses the strength to present English as a lingua franca of Pakistan, with the indigenization and amalgamation of the local terms and native jargons. The four strategies of language appropriation as pointed out by Kachru (1983), and five by Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin (2002), are inquired in this study and the data is collected in correspondence to these strategies. The data is collected from the text of the novel, Twilight in Delhi. The findings reveal that the alterations in the language under language appropriation are evident to such an extent that the localized English has the potential and prospective of embedding them and facing the literary world with a new powerful dimension against the political language dominance of the British.*

**Keywords:** Language, Appropriation, Post-Colonial, Localized English, Political Language

## INTRODUCTION

English is trimmed, modified, adapted, mixed, hybrid, corrupted, polluted and evolved with other native and indigenous languages. The versatility behind the action is justified for various reasons. Among them is the indigenization of English by the post-colonial writers. Keeping the promise of replying to the West's notion of East muteness, Spivak in '*Can the subalterns speak?*', raise the voice, and gives way to the feelings of real colonized people, show their sensations and senses the outlet, an escort to their experience; the culture, the context, the nativity in language and customs. The individuality and authenticity keeps them on a separate forum and pedestal among the rest of the world (as cited in Ashcroft Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2002). The postcolonial writers have been subjugated by the colonial oppression and marginalization and are forced to take a retaliating stance through the writings.

The linguistic authority of the colonial languages sustained even after the independence. Morson and Emerson (1990), assert that every time we speak, we respond and react to something spoken before. We interpret those earlier utterances as hostile or sympathetic, authoritative or feeble, socially or temporally close or distant, thus shaping the content and style of what we say. This makes our speech complex. The speaker's words combine and retreat from others, intersect with a third group, shaping the discourse and leaving a trace in all its semantic layers, complicating the expression and influencing stylistics. With a right kind of analysis and techniques, the words of utterances could be cited or reported from other contexts.

### **Language Appropriation**

English gives the advantage of its status and scope but lacks the possibility to convey all the cultural meanings attached to virtues of warmth, sincerity, and local dignity carried by the minority languages. The use of appropriation gives the opportunity to bring all these virtues into English.

It is not grammar which enables people to communicate, but certain communicative practices and strategies are used to convey the differences in language. The strategies are not knowledge or cognitive competence, but a means adopted by the speaker in the inevitable communicative situations. Indian linguist Khubchandani (1997), argues that the orientation in East community is different from the West as it is not based on a shared language or culture. For South Asians, shared space makes community, and it has the power to accommodate multiple language

groups of similar geographical space which is also diverse and is a norm unlike the exception in non-western communities.

Sometimes the English language is unconsciously appropriated by the non-native users. Joseph, 2006 (as cited in Awan & Ali, 2012), opines that the interference of the mother tongue brings a change in the language with its inherent resistance. When a writer from a non-native country, would produce something in English, it must have some changes under the influence of their mother tongue but in the literary writings, the indigenization is purposely done by the author as a symbol of retaliation, a portrayal, an inscription and a stamp of authentic nativity upon a certain piece of writing.

### **Appropriation in Post-Colonial Writings**

Postcolonial writing abrogates the privileged centrality of English by using language to signify difference along with using the sameness which would allow it to be understood. The indigenization of English, exclusively in the creative writings of the prior colonized states, has turned into an established occurrence which is consuming different forms and attaining popularity with the postcolonial literature spreading around the world (Iftikhar, 2012). Other than the colonial familiarity, globalization and migration are other aspects which are emerging as the forces, which are adding to the rise of works which correct English and include the traditional susceptibilities of the non-English cultures. The linguistic abrogation depicts the rejection of the postcolonial writers' concept of a particular Standard English. This agenda is followed by the Postcolonial writing. The appropriateness of the dominant language may not be challenged in catching and unfolding the local realism, but after all, the Standard English is nothing than the language of the ethnic colonization (Awan & Ali, 2012).

Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin (1989), presented the textual strategies employed by the postcolonial writers. They explain two separate processes of sabotaging the language of the center, which are abrogation; involving the rejection of language usage of the center and rejecting the metropolitan power of communication means. The second process is appropriation and re-formation of the center language. A number of strategies are used for this purpose. Apart from abrogation and appropriation, there are glossing, code-switching, code-mixing strategies. The writer challenges the politics of language established by the British by standing to the dynamic creativity of his own. Abrogation is the refusal of imperial culture categories, aesthetic and pretended standard of normative usage with its

notion of traditional and fixed meaning in the words. Shafique and Yaqoob (2012), assert that a vivacious moment in the decolonization of the language and the writing in English occur when “their works come in a hostile dialogue with the previous canonical works of literature” (p. 479).

Dutta and Hossain (2012), opine that instead of bending to the stagnant hegemony laid by the imperial language, the possibility lies in producing a strong counter-discourse in the language of their former colonizers. The abrogation and appropriation of English showed that English is not confined in being the “Queen’s language” (p.58) after being used by the Pakistani author, in the polyglossic linguistic context of the subcontinent. Use of strategies aid to achieve the process of a counter-discourse.

The strategies are used and successfully reported in ‘Strategies of Language Appropriation in Khaled Hosseini’s, *A Thousand Splendid Suns*’ by Awan and Ali (2012), which is a post-colonial text. The researchers explain the process and methodology which leads to a solid specimen of de-colonization of English as the language of the Firangi, now catering to the needs and requirements of the colonized.

The strategies of language appropriation as pointed out by Kachru (1983), and Ashcroft Griffiths & Tiffin (2002), are tabled as follows:

Kachru (1983):

1. Lexical innovations
2. Translation equivalence
3. Contextual redefinition
4. Rhetorical and functional styles

Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin (2002) proposed:

1. Glossing
2. Untranslated Words
3. Interlanguage
4. Syntactic Fusion
5. Code Switching and Vernacular Transcription

### **Historical Context of the Novel**

*Twilight in Delhi* depicts the twilight decline of Delhi with the whole Muslim culture, which started to wreck with the death of Mughal emperor Aurangzeb in 1707 and continued to deteriorate by 1857. The author displays the impacts of imperialism in the chaotic years of 1857-1919 with his minute observation of the decay of Muslim life and culture. Ali has

portrayed with sincerity the effects of imperialism in undermining the existing or native culture and described the culture, values, and traditions of sub-continent where Muslims witnessed their zenith and faced the decline of their power.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### **Analysis of the Strategies of Appropriation Used in *Twilight in Delhi***

#### ***Glossing***

An explanatory comment attached to a native word falls into this category. The glossing signifies the cultural distance and the author is confirmed that the reader is not aware of the contextual meaning of the word. The glossing could be pre, post or in the text.

“Mohalla” (Ali, 2007, p. 3), “Qawwals” (p. 41) are glossed as locality and singers respectively; which is explained to clear the concept of the reader to the concept of the context and the affiliation within the specific space, which would enhance the experiences of the people and compliment their actions and life process. “Low kotha” (p. 6) is explained in a footnote as an upper storey house. “Sherwani” (p. 12) , “karkhandar” (p. 49), “Molvi and Maktab” (p. 51), “Chamari’s” (p. 52), “The loo” (p. 61), “saqis and sarangis” (p. 73) are explained with a footnote to avoid ambiguity. “The ghee” (p. 39) appears with a foot note and so does “Kahars” (p. 43), “Kababi” (p.78), “Burqas” (p. 84), “Sabeel” (p.91), “Assalaam-alaikum” and “walaikum-assalaam” (p.93), “Tahmat” (p.100), “ghazal and daagh” (p.117), “Allah-o-Akbar” (p.130), “bania” (p.135), “Sarkar” (p. 136), “domnis” (p.155), “pindis” (p. 160), “sehra” (p.162), “the shohdays” (p.165), “pachchisi” (p.181), “Iqbal” (p.195) “ghassals” (p.232), “Hangman” (p. 241), “Kothay wali, kothay wali” (p. 259).

#### ***The Pre-Glossing***

“The great battle of Mahabharat” (p. 4), the reference is made with the word battle to explain the next word. “The waters of the Jamuna” (p. 5) and “the morning azaan” (p.17) with the usage of water and morning make some reference to comprehension. “Ya Rasul Allah [O Messenger of God]” (p.158), here the meaning is written in parenthesis to avoid any ambiguities as it is a religious phrase.

#### ***The Post Glossing***

The post glossing is seen in “Jama Mosque” (p. 4) and, “in Henna tree”

(p.7) “Chauri Bazar” (p. 38) describing the name of a local market; “Mohallah mosque” (p.41) describes that the sentence is related to some mosque and “sarangis”, “muffled drums” (p. 73), “With difficulty Mir Nihal reached the mardana, the men’s part of the house” (p. 69) the other half of the sentence describes the meaning of mardana. “nisavray pigeons” (p.104) a native word that describes a pigeon. “Yet everyone considered him a majzooob, a person who has reached a certain mystical stage when divine passion has come upon him...” (p. 259). “A discussion was going on regarding the merits of Zauq and Daagh as poets” (p. 116), the phrase as poets describe to the foreigner reader that the discussion is about two native poets. “Nausherwan which has killed nine lions,” (p. 131) an explanation of Nausherwan. “And the Qutabs, who are faqirs, act as the naibs or assistants of God on earth” (p. 142). In this sentence, Qutabs supplement faqirs which supplement naibs in return...the ubtana, a scented preparation of herbs and drugs for the complexion, was brought out” (p. 161). The definition of Ubtana leads the word.

### ***Untranslated Words***

The device of leaving words un glossed/untranslated keeps the cultural individuality unharmed and undamaged. An extra standing adds to the difference between cultures and points to the effectiveness of discourse by explaining cultural concepts, and energetically engaging the readers in locating and exploring meanings with the contexts. “Qutab Minar” (p. 4) comes with no explanation. The case is similar with “Farangis and Mussalmans” (p. 8) with the original words showing the protest and attachment with not two groups only but with two distinct words.

Sometimes the cuisines or vehicles, or kinship or nouns lose their charm and authenticity if they are explained with indulgence in the easiness and comfort of the reader’s comprehension. However, the additional meaning would only add to more ambiguity or complexity, and any alternative word would just add to more vagueness than clarity. “Raja Yudhishtira” (p. 4), with no reference made to the word Raja. Katha (p. 8) is expressed in a context where the four lines explain the context with the compliment of some English words that the reader assumes the explanation of the word as some edible item. “Baddi” (p. 162) and “Bakrid” (p. 191) stand unexplained, but perhaps the capital B of Bakrid would announce something significant about the word.

“...shooting from the Lal Kuan,” and “going into Kucha Pandit turns

to the right and terminates at Mohalla Niyaryaan...” (p. 6) none of the words are explained, but the sentence structure depicts the explanation of the address that is directed to the reader.

“A moazzin from a nearby mosque raised his voice...” (p. 30). The sentence weaved around the word describes its relation with the mosque. “Whenever he had gone inside she had talked to him from behind the purdah” (p. 33). “(W)hen a dust storm blows it means the jinns are going to celebrate a marriage” (p. 63), “the jinn,” is explained concerning some superstition. The process of making “paan” describes it as being some exotic dish and also the hand and palm dyed red shows the function of henna, (p. 76). “...Begam Waheed decided to have a meelad read” (p. 81).

“Mir Nihal was in no mood to buy...from the people of the mohalla and replying to them.” The author does not bother to explain the word mohalla, rather weaves it in the sentence to be assumed by the audience as some group of people, whereas the term means as a narrow profound locality, sharing some houses in confined premises. Moreover, the upcoming sentence expands the idea as, “His voice could be heard far and wide in several mahallas,” (p.92). Here, an expansion is made to the realm of other mohallas too.

“But he did not like the sort of pigeons Mir Nihal and Khwaja Saheb were fond of, called ‘golay’” (p. 103). here, the author does not feel the necessity to describe, but the sequence of the sentence describes that golay is a kind of pigeon. “...Kabuli pigeons were no better than the ‘nisvaray’” (p. 104), suggests for itself that nisvaray is another pigeon kind.

“No pulao has been cooked today, hafizji” (p. 259). The word pulao signifies that it is related to local cuisine.

“...[f]ound his way inside the zanana” (p. 259). Here too, the word zanana has been preferred to be used against any other English translation.

“The bania asked the farmer to give his daughter to him in marriage” (p.176), the word bania remains undefined here.

“the faqirs came, whined, begged in doleful voices,” (p. 200), here the faqirs are described indirectly as beggars.

### ***Syntactic Fusion***

It combines two different linguistic structures by mixing the syntax of

local language with the lexical forms of English. The influence of two linguistic structures works together. In the postcolonial text, neologisms do not embody cultural essence as new lexical forms in English but are evolved in the linguistic structures of the mother tongue. “Firangis and Mussalman,” (p.8) are the pluralization of local in lexics of English. “Moazzins” (p. 31), “Saiyyeds” (p. 34) “Burqas” (p. 84), “Kahars” (p.43), “Mohallas” (p.92), “Mureed” (p.122) , “Shah and seven skies” (p. 127), “ghassals and Azaans” (p. 232), “the show days” (p.165), “hakims” (p.251). “Mushtari Bai salaamed them” (p. 74). The act of greeting has been changed to past tense.

### ***Code Switching***

It is a process of switching between two or more codes in the appropriation method and altering the manners of communication. “This device is used by poly dialectical writers and serves as an interweaving mode of illustration,” (Awan & Ali, 2012, p. 487).

The choice of the language code depends on the author, who is the best judge to select according to the appropriateness of the occasion.

“Dhum! Qalandar, God, will give,  
Dhum! Qalandar, God alone;  
Milk and sugar, God will give,  
Dhum! Qalandar, thighs,  
Lacchi thy soft...” (p.78)

“Bol gai My Lord kukroo-koon” [My lord has been frightened like a defeated cock]. “Bol gai My Lord kukroo-koon” (p. 249). Here the author prefers to explain the code-switching within parenthesis.

“...he used to live in Chitli Qabqar” (p. 193) and “...the disfiguring of the Chandni Chowk” (p. 196).

### ***Lexical Innovation***

According to Kachru (1983), the lexicalization of various types in the text is made. One method is borrowing local words into English and merging the words from two different sources of lexical. Kachru further opines that the hybridized lexical items comprise of two or more elements with one from a South Asian language and the other from English. “Paan-box” (p.8), “bulbul’s nest” (p. 95), “eight-anna” (p. 131) , “twelve annas” (p. 135) , “angrezi sarkar” (p. 136), “looted Dilli” (p. 136), “Chugha coat” (p. 192), “loafer’s friends” (p. 193), “imitation Darbar” (p.195)

### ***Translation Equivalence***

The author uses Translation Equivalence to infuse the native beliefs, perceptions, setting and the way of taking things found in the belief space of the audience. Postcolonial politics of culture is inherent in the very refusal of separating the 'event on a place' from the 'language of the place' used to convey or depict that event. For instance, and blood is in its soil, is the typical example of indigenization (p. 4) where instead of explaining the wide massacre, the author prefers to use this phrase. "You have become the moon of Eid" (p. 74). "Only a year ago a new wave of freedom had surged across the breast of Hindustan" (p. 239). "I am alive" (p. 93) is a typical reply and an utterance to show that one is doing well in life and striving to keep the means of life itself.

A common native idiom is translated word to word, "When husband and wife are willing, what can the Qazi do?" (p.95), "O thou Fatto, may God's wrath fall upon thee. Where hast thou died?" (p. 95) is a typical way of cursing any when one disobeys with the exact translation of the native phrase in the second part of the utterance. The sentence, "...to those from whom he got his 'salt'" (p.137), announces the loyalty.

### ***Contextual Redefinition***

The context of the novel discussed is far away from the wildest imaginations of the western scenario. The context of the east is too rich culturally and traditionally, with its own integral and strengthened family system, kinship and values. The process of language appropriation redefines some kinship related terms. "Begum Nihal" is accepted as a norm of respect in society, with no further details explaining the details of word Begum, (p.7). "Bi Anjum" (p.8), "Mushtari Bai" (p.15), "Khwaja Saheb's pigeons" (p. 20), "Nawab Puttan" (p. 38), "Molvi Sahib" (p. 51), "Hakim Bashir" (p.103), "Bhabban Jan" (p.117).

"What had happened to the great poets of Hindustan? Where were Mir and Ghalib and Insha? Where were Dard and Sauda or even Zauq?" (p. 241). Here the pen names of the poets are uttered without and heed whether the Western reader understands or is familiar with these names; the previous line is enough to explain that these are renowned poets.

The kinship terminology and the genuine usage of it extricate the family system of the sub-continent from the Western societies. These terminologies also specify the admiration and reverence seen in the local scenario of the sub-continent.

### ***Indigenous Metonymy***

The indigenous metonymy displays the gap that exists between the expressive capacity of English and experiences of everyday life.

The author, instead of employing English in all the indigenous expressions, and replace them with the English equivalents, the cultural significance is maintained by keeping their original composition and authenticity. “but Chanbeli brought the sherbet in a silver cup...” (p.27), the sherbet could have been replaced by the drink, but the significance of sherbet lies only with this part of the geographical area. “I say, that was a rotten painch” (p. 30). “There is only one sorrow written in their qismet” (p. 45). The word destiny could be better placed with, “qismet” for explicitly. “At the Eid-gah,” there were thousands and thousands of people, all elated and happy, with attar on their bodies and collyrium in their eyes” (p. 130). In this sentence, the author does not bother to replace or explain the word Eid-gah, and similarly, attar means perfume, but the author chooses to use the native than English lexis.

“When they reached Laal Darwaza...” (p. 78) explains some spot of destination in its native name originally produced.

“...Nawab Puttan said pulling at his hookah” (p. 119). Hookah stays with its authentic identity though unknown to the non-native reader. “... and Asghar took a tonga to go to the graveyard” (p. 236). Tonga stays uncorrupted though undefined. “In the absence of my well-beloved

I have drunk, O saqi, like wine my blood. And.... I ate it like kababs with relief “(p. 240). In this piece of poetry, “O saqi,” is a typical word used in Urdu poetry to enhance the effect of drinking. “Who has not got at least two gold mohurs by him. The vizir was sitting nearby, and the king beckoned to him to search the barber’s bag” (p. 254). The words in italics could be replaced by the author with seal and minister, but he preferably chooses the local lexis. “...and came in a doli...” (p. 258). The sentence confirms that doli would be some sort of a conveyance device. “...who were not earning yet, rupees or eight-anna bits” (p. 131) anna is not replaced by any substitute of English for money. “...firing to fireworks during the festival of Shab-barat” (p. 137), the use of the word festival denotes that the reference is made to some occasion.

“...A koel began to sing and cry’ Akoel began to sing. O, dost thou, koel, sing the song” (p. 170). In these verses, the poet does not choose to

alter the word koel with Nightingale to enhance the effect of the native word. “In the hullabaloo of the wedding” (p. 174), the hustle at the wedding is not substituted with hullabaloo. “I can’t give my daughter away to a man who looks like a kazzaq” (p. 187). “When after the vida she saw Meraj...” (p. 188). In both the sentences, the words kazzaq and vida remain unglossed to retain their cultural authenticity.

### ***Indigenous Discourse Markers***

Discourse markers are employed in a particular language as the language symbol and in the society where they are spoken. The indigenous markers in the English language confirm their belonging to a specific local setting. “Dilchain, O Dilchain, get up. The master has come”, (p. 9), depicts the pure local taste. “Hai, hai, sister, what has happened to you?” (p. 63). “But, amma, I don’t think she is the type of girl who would keep Asghar happy” (p. 56). “Hai, hai, what has happened to you?” (p.162). “Hai, hai, sister, have you seen ...” (p.188). In these lines, the emotional and exclaimed word Hai is repeatedly used to enhance the surprise or sorrow or excitement in a single word.

### ***Rhetorical and functional styles***

The passion, wrath, vengeance, contempt, and hatred, often compels the speaker to use the native words which would intensify the depth of feelings of the speaker and justifies that his feelings are the offsprings of a moment and passion. “It is God’s vengeance falling on these good-as-dead Farangis,” she said. ‘May they be destroyed for what they have done to Hindustan’ (p. 137). “...poor and rich alike who had happened to be Mussalmans...” (p. 138). The rhetorical compassion of the speaker urges to display the contempt, and the pressure is too intense to think and use the substitute words in English for the sensitive issues like farangi, Hindustan and Mussalmans.

### ***Inter-Language***

When the author believes that the dialog uttered by the character at syntax level is nativized, it is legitimate to contextualize it or Pakistanize it. It remains neither the legacy of English nor Urdu. Like ‘Fatto’ (p.95) is the amalgamation of Fat and native word Motto. “salaamed” (p. 74) denotes the transformation of native word Salam in the past tense. “At which a whole chorus of ‘No’s’ rent the air” (p. 161). The word no is nativized by transforming it into “No’s. Haranguing” (p. 176) is the coinage for the term refusing.

## CONCLUSION

Along with language appropriation strategies laid by Kachru (1983); Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin (2003), two techniques were adopted in this study, i.e., Indigenous Discourse Markers and Indigenous Metonymy from Awan and Ali (2012), which were found complimenting in achieving the research goal. Overall the research has adopted eleven (11) strategies to analyze appropriation of language in *Twilight in Delhi*. The use of the wide and rigorous language appropriation in the novel, with the revelation of native cultural decisiveness by the adroit use of language, places the author of *Twilight in Delhi* in the favorable context of the post-colonial authors as the ethnic proclamation is transferred by using indigenous language in the novel.

*Twilight in Delhi*, depicts the cultural and religious heritage of a group of Muslim families residing in British India. The author preferred to use English to reach the world audience to portray the culture and norms of the Muslims of India, their lives, beliefs and ethnic practices. However, the attachment, the honor, the prestige of one's nativity comes in the front line while describing the most touching moments and speeches. Ali while writing *Twilight in Delhi* did not compromise to the sole usage of English, but spiced it with the *cardamom*, *chilies*, and *elaichee* of the native flavors and marking his stamp on the nativization of English and appropriated the language according to native taste and adaptation.

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