



Research Article

English: Empowering and/or Entrapping the Periphery

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Abstract

For centuries, the English language has been a dominant force in the world's power dynamics. Although this language was used as a weapon to subjugate the people for cultivating cultural hegemony in the colonial period, it has empowered itself as a medium to furnish a modern, civilized, rational, and educated man in today's postcolonial world (which is treated as periphery in contrast to Europe that is exhibited as center). In the process of empowering themselves through English, non-native peripheral English speakers are often entrapped in a monolingual world because they reject their native language. Now, a crucial question arises—whether the English language empowers the people of the periphery or entraps them by alienating them from their own culture and land. To address this debate, this article will examine the experiences and perspectives of peripheral writers, particularly from the Indian Subcontinent and the African Continent. Moreover, it will explore how the peripheral voice is raised to write back to the center in English and attempt to construct peripheral human subjectivity in opposition to psychological distortion. It will also seek to understand the future of the periphery and its people.

Keywords

English, Empowering, Entrapping, Hybridity, Periphery.

1. Introduction

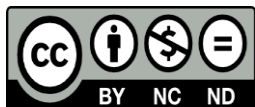
Language is a significant tool for human being to express themselves and their surroundings. It helps human beings communicate and understand others' views, but it is not as simple as it looks because of its interrelation with various aspects. The crucial point of language is its involvement with power and position, influencing the world's hierarchical politics. Language has become a vital component of societal and global power dynamics. This power is expressed through language that originated in the European colonization of the

Orient (Africa, the Indian Subcontinent, North America, the Caribbean, Australia, and other parts of the world). In the colonial era, spanning the early seventeenth century to the mid-twentieth century, the colonizer's language was used to dominate colonized peoples. It was implemented to hegemonize and subjugate the colonized people psychologically, culturally, socially, and politically. It helped the colonizer to change the colonized individual's ideology and view. It compelled colonized people to see the world through the colonizers' eyes.

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Interestingly, the colonial rulers forced the colonized natives to use the colonizers' language as the medium of administration, the education system, and literature, ignoring the colonized people's languages. Gradually, colonized people willingly accepted the colonizers' languages. So, the colonial machine produced the colonized hybrid humans who preferred the colonizers' language more than their mother tongue to achieve the privileges of hierarchical power and position. In this process, the English language gained a superior status over the colonized native languages in British colonies. In the Indian Subcontinent and the African Continent, the British Empire's imposition of the English language on Indians and Africans produced the alienated hybrid subject with a fragmented, distorted, and deformed psychology and reality. The colonized subject's struggle to be liberated was done by converting English language domination into English language resistance. The people of the Indian Subcontinent and Africa weaponized the English language against the British Empire's linguistic, literary, societal, ideological, and cultural representations. Consequently, the English language was not only a tool for colonized natives to resist British Empire domination but also an instrument for postcolonial subjects to rebuild their nation and reject neo-colonialism. Over time, the British Empire collapsed, and the colonies gained independence; however, the legacy of British colonialism persists in the postcolonial countries. Although the territorial colonial era is over (except for the incident of the USA's conquest of Afghanistan and Iraq in recent days), psychological, social, cultural, and political dominations still exist. Here, the English language plays a crucial role in accomplishing these tasks. Now, English is the medium for the former colonizer to carry out the oppression of the postcolonial people. On the other hand, the postcolonial people are resisting neo-imperial oppression by utilizing English. The postcolonial people consider it a weapon to strike back against Western domination. Turning English into a double-edged sword gives the postcolonial people a voice to express their colonial and postcolonial experiences. It prepares postcolonial people to understand the world's context and perspective and to capture the world's attention. Postcolonial writers also seize this opportunity. They use English to portray the postcolonial marginalized people and consider English as a medium between socially speechless persons and the powerful center. They utilize English to regain their lost power and position. English helps them to present themselves as Other (in the eyes of the West) and to create a strong identity. They no longer need to rely on the West for representation. Now, postcolonial countries have recognized the global necessity of English. English has earned a significant status among the world's languages, making it a language for international communication today. In this context, the English language offers postcolonial/peripheral countries an opportunity to gain power and position, thereby developing resistance against foreign domination. Simultaneously, it threatens to entrap the

postcolonial countries under the hegemonic domination. Reflecting the complexity, the question arises: Is the English language entrapping the peripheral subject while empowering them? This article will examine this question critically and attempt to determine the outcome.

2. Methods

This study uses a qualitative and interpretive approach based on textual and discourse analysis. It examines selected literary works and theoretical writings from postcolonial scholars such as Frantz Fanon, Edward Said, Homi K. Bhabha, and Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o. A comparative method is applied to analyze texts from India, Africa, and the Caribbean. The study focuses on themes like hybridity, linguistic power, identity, and resistance to evaluate the dual role of English as both empowering and entrapping in postcolonial contexts. MLA 9th edition style was followed to cite all sources used in the study.

3. Result and Discussion

Possibility of Being Entrapped: Role of the English Language in Postcolonial/Peripheral World

Following independence from British colonization, a revolutionary change was anticipated with the onset of decolonization in the newly independent postcolonial countries. However, the English language has not lost its position; instead, it has become a more lucrative and functional language among postcolonial countries. For that, an intense debate has erupted over the range of use of the English language compared to native languages. Surprisingly, the English language continues its prestigious status in the postcolonial era. Moreover, the English language has become a significant language in the national education, literature, and intellectual practices of postcolonial countries. The postcolonial English language, education, and literature evoke similar colonial anxieties among postcolonial hybrid subjects. As a result, the postcolonial hybrid subject, even after attempts to adhere to decolonization projects, continues to fight against the domination of the English language and its cultural hegemony. The resistance that postcolonial hybrid subjects intend to initiate takes the form of a pseudo-role that entraps the postcolonial psyche. The dependence on the English language is not only for communication with the international world but also for shaping a hybrid psychological and cultural self. The significant point is that

the postcolonial hybrid self is entangled in hybrid decolonization. To produce a new postcolonial situation that resists the domination of the English language and culture, the postcolonial hybrid self is double-entrapped. The postcolonial hybrid self is in the endeavour to create new language, discourse, ideology, culture, and identity. Interestingly, the postcolonial hybrid self not only mirrors itself in the English self, but also aims to develop a postcolonial English self that produces modified postcolonial English or other Englishes based on the country's location, such as Indian English, African English, Caribbean English, and so on. Fascinated by the development of other Englishes, postcolonial hybrid selves, including writers and novelists, have dedicated themselves to using these other Englishes to delineate the postcolonial/peripheral scenario, experience, and culture. Besides this, they are keen to earn recognition and authority not only from the national center but also from the Western center, using this language. The transformation of English from a mundane language of communication to a symbol of superior status in hierarchical postcolonial countries makes it more demanding. As the voice of Western power, the English language retains its enduring appeal to postcolonial peoples. It has been accepted and practiced to unfold the postcolonial self and story. It has become an effective medium for sharing the postcolonial journal and the postcolonial periphery's journey with readers around the world. Many writers, especially novelists from India, Africa, and the Caribbean, have used the English language to represent their postcolonial and peripheral experiences, struggles, journeys, and consequences.

In postcolonial India, the emergence of Indian English novelists and their influence on Indian national literature have compelled the nativization of English through an Indianization of the language. There are several reasons for Indianizing the English language. Firstly, the Indianized English language helps form a new Indian identity from a global perspective. Secondly, it produces ownership with authority over a foreign language. Thirdly, it creates a position for connecting the local, national, and international spheres. Fourthly, it facilitates the transition from the center to the periphery and vice versa. Fifthly, it supports the formation of the Indian self, society, and nation, rejecting denial. Sixthly, it reconstructs the representation of India not from the other's point of view but from the Indian outlook. Seventhly, the Indianized English

language facilitates the development of Indian narrative and literature, which serve as counter-narratives to the British and American versions. Through the Indianized English language, Indian novelists rediscover Indian essence and nationalism. However, the question is: has the Indianized English language entrapped the Indian psyche? The answer to that question can be found in the works of Indian English novelists. There are two types of Indian English novelists, categorized by residence, and three types based on period. Under the Category of residence, Indian English novelists living in the USA, Canada, the UK, and Australia are making significant contributions by raising the voices of peripheral Indian characters and sharing unheard tales with national and international audiences. Among the non-resident Indian English novelists, Salman Rushdie, Jhumpa Lahiri, Rohinton Mistry, Amitav Ghosh, etc., have turned Indianized English into a more global than national language by transforming ordinary Indian local/remote characters into heroes and by telling the ignored stories of Indian subaltern/otherness. They have infused Indian words and vernacular discourses into English and developed an acceptance of this mode to celebrate the Indian periphery. Simultaneously, they have represented the diaspora anxiety connecting to that Indian periphery. The blending of the Indians' experiences of home and abroad positions the novels' heroes and stories as reflections of modern India. With this, they have made Indianized English globally accepted and authoritative. On the other hand, resident Indian English novelists have also played a significant role in making English an integral part of Indian life and culture. Among them, the first-generation Indian novelists like Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao, R. K. Narayan, G. V. Desani, etc., the second-generation Indian novelists, for instance, Khusbant Sigh, Anita Desai, etc., and the third-generation Indian novelists such as Vikram Seth, Amit Chaudhuri, Upamanyu Chatterjee, Arundhati Roy, Kiran Desai, etc. have also Indianized the English language. They have gradually refined the English language for Indian readers, writers, critics, and theorists by incorporating Indian notions, perspectives, discourses, ideologies, cultures, and lifestyles. Their representation has repackaged the Indianized English language with an approach that celebrates ancient/precolonial India, rejects the colonized India, and seeks to regain modern India. To do that, the heavy dependency on the Indianized English pushes the Indian psyche into a state of self-denial complexity, which

produces the psychological violence. Indian English novelists desperately attempt to deconstruct the Western narrative style and its structural function to challenge Western authority. The new image that Indian English novelists aim to create through the Indianized English language falls into a trap, as this language mirrors the fragmented, distorted, and deformed existence of the Indian position. The legacy of the colonial supremacy that the Indian English novelists dream of winning in the postcolonial period through Indianized English becomes a double-entrapping cage, from which they cannot gain ownership to produce Indian authority. Instead, they have to go through the everlasting torment of learning a foreign language and pretending that the foreign language is their own. For the double entrapment, the Indian English novelists' search for the Indian self/hero with an Indian voice will be everlasting, as the medium of search is non-Indian. Linguistic alienation will never allow Indian English novelists, their heroes, and stories to enjoy freedom, legitimacy, and authority.

In Africa, postcolonial countries such as Nigeria, Kenya, and South Africa faced significant conflict over the use of English, which was not only their official language but also their cultural language immediately after independence. Due to the linguistic diversity among many tribes, the English language facilitated Nigeria, Kenya, and South Africa in overcoming their linguistic and tribal conflicts. When writers, especially novelists like Ngugi wa Thiong'o of Kenya, Chinua Achebe, and Wole Soyinka of Nigeria, attempted to convey the African self and essence in English, they struggled to represent African sensibilities, tastes, and consciences. They found the task of African representation quite impossible. Here, Chinua Achebe provided a new concept for African representation in English. He proposed to create a new English for Africans and African representation in 'The African Writer and the English Language'. His proposal to create Africanized English offered a new hope for Africans, as it might provide a means to escape the crisis in African representation through African English literature. Although Ngugi wa Thiong'o opposed the proposal to create Africanized English and to represent African literature in it, due to its effects on African psychology, Africanized English becomes essential in the postcolonial African context for defending against the domination of Western representation. The best example can be found in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, which is considered a

counter-representation to the Western representation of Africa and Africans in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. A similar kind of Africanized English is used in Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Petals of Blood* and Wole Soyinka's *The Lion and The Jewel*, which display the African sense and culture. Like Indian English writers/novelists, the African writers/novelists can also be categorized into two types- diaspora African writers/non-resident writers and resident/local writers. However, instead of the diaspora crisis, we see non-resident African writers/novelists engaged in constructing a country-based African English that reflects the African voice. Africanized English offers freedom to the African psyche and to African writers/novelists. However, it is also threatening to lose the nativism/Africanism, African language, and African identity. According to Thiong'o, language significantly shapes a culture's position and that of its members. If the language of a society is influenced by an outside language, such as English, then the society's moral, ethical, and aesthetic values will also be affected. Ultimately, the culture is displaced from its original position. Language has the power to manipulate human beings' psychology. Thiong'o thinks that language has a special role as the 'spiritual eyeglasses through which [the people] come to view themselves and their place in the universe' (Thiong'o 14-15). Language is a kind of 'memory bank of a people's experience in history' (Thiong'o 15). It has an enormous impact on culture and human psychology. Thiong'o remarks, 'In my view, language was the most important vehicle through which that power fascinated and held the soul prisoner. The bullet was the means of physical subjugation. The language was the means of the spiritual subjugation' (9). The African children are spiritually subjugated because they are forced as well as encouraged to take the English language as their classroom language, ignoring their mother tongue. So, they discover the two worlds through the two languages. One is English, and the other is their native language. They find themselves in an alien environment. As the alienation of the African child is the fall-out of colonization, Thiong'o calls it 'colonial alienation' (17). Due to the 'dissociation, divorce or alienation from the immediate environment' (Thiong'o 17), the African child cannot construct a proper human subject and identity. The gap between the imagined and the real worlds splits the child's human subjectivity, pulling it in opposing directions. The psychological division or duality in the individual is reflected in

his/her daily life. If the individuals who make up a society grow up with this psychological division, it eventually affects their culture, society, country, and even the entire African continent. African people educated through the English educational system and language create a hybrid English language, a combination of African and English languages. As a result, not only are the African people falling into the trap, but also the innocent children are suffering enormously. As African English writers/novelists are also the outcome of that educational system, they are at risk of being entrapped if they cannot maintain a balance between English and African languages in creating African literature.

In the Caribbean, English was the only language to enable effective communication among the different linguistic groups. In the semi-biographical novels, *The Mimic Men* and *The House for Mr. Biswas* by Caribbean writer V. S. Naipaul, we see the importance of the English language in the social and cultural spheres. Naipaul portrayed how the English language became the ultimate desired language for the Caribbean people and writers, as it was the only language that could ensure access to the Western/White world. To gain favor with the English language, Caribbean people were prevented from communicating in their native languages and social dialects. They preferred a Caribbean English that incorporated elements of Indian and African languages. Even after having a similar kind of threats to be trapped in the English language, like India and Africa, the Caribbean people were creating the Caribbean English. Caribbean English is more hybrid in nature, as English has adopted both Indian and African linguistic features, methods, structures, discourses, and ideologies. Because of this Caribbeanized English, the Caribbean people, as well as writers, are in danger of losing their inherited mother tongues and identities. Although Caribbean society is constructed based on the concept of creole/hybrid, the Caribbeanized English has entrapped the psyche and culture.

Apparently, the Indianized English language, the Africanized English language, and the Caribbeanized English are the tools to resist the domination of the English language, developing nativism. In depth, these other Englishes place postcolonial subjects in a never-ending alien atmosphere marked by fragmentation, deformity, and distortion. With the risk of being entrapped in psychological patterns, postcolonial subjects are also vulnerable to being confined to social roles, leading

to cultural entrapment in the construction of cultural image and identity. Although the nativizing of the English language by territorial location opens the door to the center of world power, it psychologically, socially, and culturally entraps the postcolonial subject. The nativizing of the English language aims to decolonize the colonial and neo-colonial mind, attitude, and representation. Still, it produces further colonization, threatening to erase the diverse linguistic existence of postcolonial subjects. Nativized English languages lead postcolonial subjects to align with similar notions, thoughts, understandings, perspectives, ideologies, and cultures. This alignment will compel postcolonial subjects to participate in cosmopolitanism. Although the Western world cherishes cosmopolitanism for its single-minded pursuit of developing a similar perspective, the debate arises over the acceptability of cosmopolitanism in postcolonial countries through nativized English. Even though the writers/novelists of postcolonial countries are desperately trying to decolonize English by incorporating native signs, images, words, discourses, contexts, and cultural devices, they are entrapped in a process of transformation bias. While transforming the nativity into the English linguistic setup, can they ignore the influence of Englishness and the politics of power dynamics? Postcolonial English writers constantly claim to be successful in decolonizing their English texts by replacing the postcolonial native subjects, stories, discourses, ideologies, and cultures to cultivate a native sense. However, they cannot claim a sense of belongingness and authority due to the English language's foreign identity. Moreover, enriching a foreign language in the name of developing World literature will never give recognition to the postcolonial native language and literature. The assumption of using the postcolonial native English language creates an illusory setup that showcases postcolonial cultural cultivation through the native language, enriching the English language and literature. In this process, postcolonial subjects and writers alike fall into a pretentious entrapment. The nativized English language produces a fractured linguistic structure from which postcolonial subjects and writers suffer, and from which they also produce psychic duality. Thus, the nativized English language ultimately double-colonizes and threatens to undermine the native language, its power to create a native image, and its capacity to convey a native sense.

The English Language: Weapon to Empower the Postcolonial/Peripheral Self

Even though the English language entraps postcolonial subjects, it simultaneously empowers them at multiple levels. Firstly, the English language provides postcolonial people with the opportunity to read, write, and speak in the language of powerful Western countries, such as the USA, the UK, Canada, and Australia. Through this, postcolonial people can establish a proper communication channel and bring about change in Western-centered exotic representation. Nativized English accelerates the exchange of ideas and the flow of communication. Secondly, the English language facilitates the acquisition of Western knowledge by postcolonial people, while also attracting Western countries to explore postcolonial countries. By acquiring knowledge, postcolonial people can advance their thought processes. Thirdly, the use of English in education helps postcolonial people stay well-connected to the world. Although many oppose English-language education, postcolonial countries have adopted English as the language of education. Instead of providing education in native postcolonial languages, higher education often makes English mandatory for postcolonial students to acquire Western knowledge. Fourthly, postcolonial countries have continued to make English literature a core component of their education systems and for their students. As English literature incorporates English culture and the hegemonic sense of Englishness, it cultivates an understanding of Englishness within postcolonial contexts. Knowledge of Englishness prompts postcolonial subjects to write stories and novels about postcolonial lives, societies, and cultures in English. In this way, the English language provides opportunities for postcolonial people and countries to raise their voices and ensure their rights in world politics. These English-language voices can be considered the fifth category of empowerment. Sixthly, using English to construct the voices of postcolonial countries creates an urge to reformulate English through nativization. Postcolonial writers have been using native words, discourses, ideologies, and contexts to develop postcolonial heroes. In this way, they have been constructing the nativized English. India has developed Indianized English. Africa has produced Africanized English. The Caribbean has formulated the Caribbean English. Seventhly, the postcolonial countries have constructed a national

image in contrast to the Western image. That national image produces a sense of nationalism with national integration. This promotes the national identity. Eighthly, the nativized postcolonial English establishes a linguistic economy. Because the English language is viewed as the medium for accessing the Western powerhouse, postcolonial countries add economic value by investing money, time, energy, and policy in producing English speakers. Ninthly, the English language becomes an essential tool for exerting control in postcolonial countries, and the English-speaking hybrid people play a crucial role in maintaining the power balance. Tenthly, the English language is a key tool for shifting postcolonial countries from the periphery to the center and from the other to the self. Thus, the English language helps postcolonial countries shift the world literary paradigm.

The English language empowers writers from postcolonial countries in a significant way. Among these writers, novelists from India, Africa, and the Caribbean have used English most effectively to resist imperial domination and to represent the postcolonial self, society, and culture. They have contributed significantly to the nativization of English in their postcolonial countries. For instance, R. K. Narayan, Salman Rushdie, and Amitav Ghosh, among the most notable Indian English writers and novelists, have significantly influenced the use of the English language in the Indian context. Through their marvelous novels, they made drastic changes in several sectors. Firstly, they have incorporated the Indian heroes, whether native or hybrid, into the position of self. By this, they have broken the tradition of having a hero/self only for Western/European/White/British characters. Secondly, they have used an Indian plot/context rather than a Western/British setup. They have explored the Indian periphery and its periphery, focusing on ancient and contemporary Indian architectural, historical, social, religious, and cultural heritages. Thirdly, they have altered the West-dominated psyche and perspective. By making the hero and the context Indian, they have developed the Indian psyche and perspective, enabling readers to see India and Indians as independent. By incorporating the Indian psyche and perspective into their novels, they have initiated the process of decolonizing the mind. Fourthly, they have demonstrated a gradual shift toward adopting English, resulting in an Indianized form of English. R. K. Narayan, Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao, etc., were pioneers among Indian English

novelists who made English lucid, vivid, and understandable to common Indian readers. Moreover, they created an Indian ambiance to defy the Western/British domination. Salman Rushdie, Anita Desai, Arundhati Roy, and others have been representing the second generation in the field of Indian English novels. They have taken the English language to a new level, blending it with Indian words. Thus, they have created an Indian discourse in English. Amitav Ghosh, Anita Desai, Jhumpa Lahiri, Rohinton Mistry, etc., being third-generation novelists of Indian English literature, have given the impression of using English to surface Indian life and reality. They have also flourished in the Indian diasporic literature. They have produced a hybrid of Indian English. Fifthly, they have produced a cyclical tale that reflects the Indian historical saga. This cyclic tale reflects a chronological buildup. It connects the individual story to the national story. Sixthly, they have cultivated an authority through the Indianized English language not only in the domain of Indian literature but also in the realm of World literature. This authority enables them to establish an Indianized notion, discourse, ideology, and culture both nationally and globally. Seventhly, Indian novelists have used English to construct a sense of Indian cultural integrity and unity. They have integrated the Indianized English language to foster a national perspective and a sense of nationalism. This is how Indian English novelists have transformed the Indianized English language into a tool of empowerment. Like Indian novelists, African writers, especially novelists, also use the English language to empower the African self, psyche, and voice. Although they fight against the Western generalized notion of African ignorance, they have been trying to unite the diverse African countries and cultures through the English language. In English, Nigerian writer Chinua Achebe has played a crucial role in transforming it from entrapment to empowerment. He desires to use the English language not only to inform the outside world about the true picture of pre-colonial Africa and the effects of colonization, but also to unite the different African tribes, ethnic groups, languages, religions, societies, and countries into a single African continent. With the help of the Africanized English language, he wants to make a new Africa that will be able to resist the domination of neo-imperialism in the postcolonial era. According to him, African writers should write in a new, Africanized English that is understandable to both African people and outsiders.

Although English is the language inherited from the colonizers, Achebe takes it up and strikes back using the colonizer's language to give a new voice to Africa. His intention is disclosed in a speech entitled 'The African Writer and the English Language' in 1964: 'What I do see is a new voice coming out of Africa, speaking of the African experience in a worldwide language' (Achebe 433). Despite this, Achebe still feels the conflict between being an African and portraying African reality through the colonizer's language. Perhaps Achebe has 'no other choice' because Africa, after colonial rule, can only be truly represented in a hybrid language, like the Africanized English he creates. Achebe closes the essay by making clear his use of English to bridge their pre-colonial experience, the effects of colonization, and their post-colonial condition, '... I feel that the English language can carry the weight of my African experience. However, it will have to be a new English, still in full communion with its ancestral home but altered to suit its new African surroundings' (Achebe 434). He thinks that African writers should prefer Africanized English as the medium of expression for constructing African literature. He believes that the Africanized English language can carry and nurture African literature. He thinks 'African literature [is] as a newborn infant' (Achebe 429) because the Africanized English language will introduce and rewrite the African literature. In this endeavour, Kenyan novelist Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Nigerian dramatist Wole Soyinka are also contributing. Interestingly, African writers are struggling to preserve African identity and resist Western domination. The Africanized English language empowers the African identity, culture, and literature. A similar situation is found in the Caribbean Islands. The English language has empowered the Caribbean self and society by removing linguistic complexity. Instead of being victims, Caribbean writers/novelists are empowered to present the Caribbean voice, psyche, and ideology. Interestingly, it brings out the Caribbean self from the identity crisis. It gives a rich representation to the world's readers. For example, the emergence of V. S. Naipaul as a Caribbean novelist and the contribution of his English novels to the portrayal of the diverse life, livelihoods, and culture of the Caribbean Islands, in contrast to European/British counterparts, shows the power of the English language.

The English language, even though nativized in postcolonial countries, has empowered formerly colonized populations

to raise their voices and represent themselves through their native identities, cultures, and aims. It facilitates the opportunity to construct a parallel, nativized English narrative alongside the native national narrative. It mitigates internal divisions in postcolonial countries and fosters national unity. Nativized English narratives empower postcolonial countries to claim authority, enabling them to secure a dignified position in world politics. Moreover, it fosters a harmonious relationship with other countries. From a micro perspective, it is helpful to explore the postcolonial self and decolonize the invisible dominations of Western powers. It brings out the psychic desire while avoiding psychic violence. It saves the postcolonial self, other, and otherness from misrepresentation, stereotyping, and hegemonic categorization. Overall, the English language empowers the postcolonial self and his/her narrative.

Search for Authority: English on the verge of Sign, Self, and Agency

Postcolonial countries and their populations have chosen the English language, recognizing its multilayered benefits, even amid the threats of entrapment. The primary reason for embracing the English language and empowering the postcolonial self is the deep-seated institutional presence in the educational, societal, economic, administrative, legislative, and cultural domains. Postcolonial countries and their governments cannot deny the real effectiveness of the English language and are unable to find a suitable replacement, despite attempts to erase its existence in the name of nationalism, patriotism, and decolonization. Interestingly, postcolonial countries attempted to instigate revolutionary change by transforming nationalism, patriotism, and decolonization into symbols, thereby cultivating new practices to establish a framework that would shape a nation's cultural relationality about individual identity. Unfortunately, they could not sustain their endeavor due to the realities of the situation. They had to negotiate their rebel consciousness to survive in the world competition. Moreover, the colonial legacy within the postcolonial framework was difficult to ignore or erase. The replacement through hybridization and its signs made it impossible to establish the nationalist rebel consciousness, but offered a path to negotiate the English language and its authority. They had to accept '[t]he process of reinscription and negotiation' (Bhabha 191),

which searches 'new meaning – happens in the temporal break in-between the sign, deprived of subjectivity, in the realm of the intersubjective' (Bhabha 191). Using the English language, they are in the process of making the signs and the new meanings in purpose to earn 'dehistoricized authority' (Bhabha 196) through 'Man and his doubles[/hybrids]' (Bhabha 196) to participate in the construction of 'a modern Western disciplinary society' (Bhabha 196). By producing the nativized English language, they are in an endeavour to have 'invisible power' (Bhabha 197) and 'dehistoricized figure' (Bhabha 197) in the postcolonial self. The nativized English language is helping the postcolonial self feel new. Still, the conflicting issue is – if the postcolonial self searches for its new identity following the footprint of colonial legacy and the process of learning the signs and new meanings using the nativized English language through the postcolonial agencies, there is a fear of losing the native identity and voice in the endeavor to gain the dehistoricized authority. Postcolonial agencies must perform consciously in this regard. The process of producing a new relation among the sign, the self, and agency to earn authority through nativized English may push the postcolonial subject into double alienation and raise the danger of losing their diverse native identity and voice. The postcolonial agencies have to take a careful procedure with proper psychological trauma management to develop the desired powerful post-colonized self and nation. In this matter, the postcolonial agencies must consider the treatment of the postcolonial periphery and its subjects. To earn authority, they should not only work on cosmopolitan relationships but also facilitate peripheral relationships within the periphery. The priority should be to move away from following Western treatment and perspective from the periphery, or the periphery's periphery. The peripheral people have their own language to represent them. However, even if they are familiar with nativized English, the voice of the peripheral subject does not reach the center. Alternatively, it is better to say that the West does not want to recognize the peripheral voice. The idea that 'English plays a central role in empowering the subjugated and marginalized, and eroding the division between the 'haves' and the 'have nots'' (Crystal 24) is denied. Because it is not true that only English can fulfill 'the desire to have a voice in world affairs' (Crystal 24). The periphery requires additional instruments, such as political, economic, technological, and intellectual power, to establish

itself in a position where the West will listen to the periphery's voice. So, Crystal says that 'Solutions are more likely to come from the domain of economic policy, not language policy' (25). Interestingly, there is considerable discussion on the English language within the domain of the English elite (the West) and the English periphery (the elite of the East). Unfortunately, we have overlooked the role of English within a peripheral society. Like the world's center and periphery, we also find two groups – the elite and the subaltern in a society in marginalized countries. There, the elite are proficient in the English language and are always associated with power. However, the subaltern is far away from that. Though they do not speak English, it is assumed they lack a language or a voice. The subalterns use a different language, unlike the elite, who use English. The irony is – they have no political, intellectual, or economic power. That is why they are presented as a silent, voiceless class of people. Simultaneously, we observe limited representation of subalterns in national and global narratives, as they are often suppressed. Ironically, having a voice and changing the future depend on the West (from a global perspective) and the national elite (from a social perspective), and on whether they will listen to the periphery. Still, the national agencies of postcolonial countries can change the scenario. They can patronize the writers of periphery/subaltern/unprivileged groups utilizing the legislative establishment, educational institution, language policy, national narrative and cultural outcomes to cultivate '[a]lternative discourse ... as a means of solidarity and collective action ... [b]y sharing ... stories and experiences ... creating a sense of community and shared purpose' (Devaki 6). Those writers can facilitate the periphery/subaltern/unprivileged groups 'to challenge dominant ideologies and representations, assert their perspectives and experiences, reclaim agency over their narratives, preserve their cultural identities, and build solidarity and collective action ... work towards a more just and equitable society' (Devaki 6). They can 'assert their right to self-representation and resist the homogenizing forces of globalization ...' (Devaki 6). The national agencies can emphasize 'community narratives' (Devaki 6) to form a collective narrative with the purpose of empowering the periphery/subaltern/unprivileged self, sense, and story. In this regard, they can use the nativized English language to construct the collective/national narrative. Although there are challenges to be dominated by the nativized

English language's 'linguistic neo-imperialism' (Zeng et al. 07), the national agencies should take initiatives such as 'plan[ning] and implement[ing] ... language programs' (Zeng et al. 07), 'maintain ... multilingualism and formulate the relevant policies' (Zeng et al. 07), and 'foster linguistically inclusive cyberspace and social media applications' (Zeng et al. 07) to secure the native languages. The national agencies should seek the authority that connects the self, the sign, and the institution. They should make the English language 'integrated into a polycentric language system rather than maintaining its position as the only global vernacular' (Zeng and Yang 5). They need to control the 'English linguistic hegemony' (Zeng & Yang 5) although '... with the increasing number of voices from across the world, the dominance of the English language may adopt a more accommodating and inclusive form, becoming part of a multilingual global conversation rather than maintaining its position as the only means of international communication' (Zeng and Yang 5). They have to maintain a balance between nativized English's entrapment/dominance and empowerment/resistance. They must focus on the postcolonial subject's development of linguistic structure, which leads to the careful construction of the postcolonial self, so that the postcolonial self does not suffer from the rupture of the coherent relation among sign, self, and agency.

4. Conclusion

Even after debating the role of the nativized English language, the challenge for postcolonial/peripheral subjects remains to utilize it effectively. Postcolonial nations and novelists are grappling with this debate. Keeping the danger of being entrapped by English in the background, they are striving to achieve the best results with nativized English. As former colonies, postcolonial countries need to reposition themselves globally. The nativized English language can help them to elevate their position and move from the periphery to the center. In addition, it can help the postcolonial/peripheral representation emerge from hegemonic, stereotypical Western representation. By establishing relationships among the sign, self, and agency, the nativized English language can construct authority that shapes the postcolonial country's narrative and identity. In this way, the postcolonial countries and subjects can join the world narrative/literature. Although they struggle to accommodate the rebel consciousness with hybridity, they have no choice but to accept and celebrate it – the blending of

nativity and Western modernity. The nativized English language must be cherished, adopted, and practiced by postcolonial countries and subjects as they strive to become hybrids. In this journey, postcolonial countries and subjects should utilize the authority of nativized English. They must exercise caution when using nativized English, as this language may entrap the psyche of the postcolonial self, the structure of postcolonial institutions/agencies, and the ideology of postcolonial culture in imitating the initial learning process. Many language learners struggle to overcome the initial learning process, becoming psychological slaves to the English language, discourse, ideology, culture, and narrative. Fortunately, those who can cross the boundary of imitation become fruitful in representing the native/homeland/postcolonial/peripheral subjects, societies, and stories. In this regard, the postcolonial novelists of India, Nigeria, Kenya, and the Caribbean Islands are contributing on a massive scale. Being aware of the debate, they are trying to balance between entrapment and empowerment by exploring and redrawing the national silent periphery. In most cases, they succeed in representing the national silent periphery by nativizing English, incorporating native words, discourse, ideology, characters, settings, stories, and cultures. By it, they are making the postcolonial blockholes accessible to the world's readers. Moreover, they are breaking the fixity of the so-called hierarchical positions. They are also redefining, reidentifying, and re-reporting the postcolonial periphery alongside the national center. The significant thing is that the postcolonial novelists are celebrating their nativized English language instead of the standard/original English language, ignoring the Western/British/European endorsement. Although most postcolonial novelists have gained recognition from Western institutions/countries, they are attempting to shift the center of recognition by empowering postcolonial institutions/countries. This courageous act by postcolonial novelists is commendable. By enriching the native English language, postcolonial countries and their novelists should continue to explore themselves, aware of the need to fight back against entrapment.

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