



Regional literature in the light of Indian English: An overview

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Abstract

While there are 23 recognized regional languages in India, there are an additional 2,000 regional languages spoken there. English is thus indispensable in this country. In a country like India, where the national language would be impossible, the colonizers bestowed to us the now-universally-spoken English in exchange for the plunder of India's valuable cultural artifacts. This study takes a look at the term "literature" through the lens of Indian English and analyses works written by Indian authors in the English language and works written in India's regional languages. By associating itself with post-colonial literature, IWE claims to be superior than India's regional literature. Since IWE is not a discrete body, most of what constitutes it comes from the amalgamation of Indian Diaspora literature written in English. Contrarily, Regional literature struggles to take a deep breath since it cannot find a large enough audience to be uplifted and its aroma spread over the globe like IWE has.

Keywords: Indian english literature, Indian english with regional literature, translation

Introduction

During the period of British control in India, the groundwork was laid for what would become known as Indian Writing in English. The seed has now grown into a tree, complete with lovely blossoms and luscious fruits. Natives are sampling the fruits, while visitors are chewing and swallowing them. It occurred naturally as a result of regular tending, trimming, and feeding. Beginning with Michael Madhusudan Dutt's writings, it was nurtured during the 1930s by R. K. Narayan, Mulk Raj Anand, and Raja Rao. For their contributions to literature, which were all written in English rather than a local dialect, these four authors are often seen as cornerstones of Indian writing in English. The ex-colonized began writing about their trials and hardships soon after gaining independence from the British Raj, and they did it in the colonizer's language, which they had abandoned after falling on hard times in the post-independence period.

Regional Literature in Indian English

Local Indian literature is hidden behind a blanket of English-language writing from India. The Vintage Book of Indian Writing and The Picador Book of Modern Indian Literature were written by Rushdie and Amit Chaudhuri, respectively. provided their perspectives on the subject of IWE vs writers who reside outside of India and write about India in their respective books. Observations by Salman Rushdie "the ironic proposition that India's best writing since independence may have been done in the language of the departed imperialists is simply too much for some folks to bear" – "created a lot of resentment among many writers, including writers in English. Amit Chaudhuri, in his book questions" – "Can it be true that Indian writing, that endlessly rich, complex and problematic entity, is to be represented by a handful of writers who write in English, who live in England or America and whom one might have met at a party?" In a row, Chaudhuri expressed his views after Rushdie, "Indian Writing in English commenced to use magical realism, bogginess, on-linear narrative and hybrid language to uphold themes seen as humanity viewed as the representation in miniature of India and apparently mirroring Indian conditions". When comparing these works to those of earlier authors, he notes that their use of English is pure, but that readers like R.K. Narayan would require cultural understanding to fully understand them. As a corollary, he believes that Indians is a topic that is produced almost exclusively in IWE and does not manifest in regional/vernacular writings. The native Indian English authors' efforts to reach a global audience and monetize their work have paid off in spades.

Literary critic Obli Wali ponders, "one wonders what would have happened to English literature for instance, if writers like Spenser, Shakespeare, Donne and Milton had neglected English and written in French or Latin. Simply because these classical languages were the cosmopolitan languages of their times". The achievement of authors who work in regional languages is crucial. Using a language and setting that are authentic to the location being depicted, regional literature is a subgenre of literature. This local literature, via its eccentric and in-depth depiction, shows how one may really connect with the culture of a certain location. Regional literature in India, including fiction, poetry, and theatre, has a long history of flourishing. Indeed, it has long been the beating center

of Indian writing, and it pays fitting honour to the literary tradition of India. And it has always been a treasure trove of all our traditions and culture, as well as a source of tremendous interest among Indian authors.

The kathas and stories of our ancestors live on in regional literature. In their works of subtle beauty, authors like R.K. Narayan, Raja Rao, and Mulk Raj Anand gave voice to regional flavour in unique ways. These authors "indigenized" the English language to include Indian perspective. For instance, in his well-known work *Kanthapura*, Raja Rao exposes his readers to a little town in southern India, describing its inhabitants and their way of life in great detail. The piece has a distinct Indian flavour, and Raja Rao uses standard English to give it a Kannada beat. "There is no village in India, however mean, that has not a rich sthala-purana, or legendary history, of its own. Some god or godlike hero has passed by the village -Rama might have rested under this pipal-tree, Sita might have dried her clothes, after her bath, on this yellow stone, or the Mahatma himself, on one of his many pilgrimages through the country, might have slept in this hut, the low one, by the village gate." - An Overview of *Kanthapura* The novels and short stories of Narayan all have vivid descriptions of Malgudi and its environs. Even though he wrote in English, his books have a flavour of Tamil, his native language, since they are born of regional experience. It is the responsibility of the region writer to highlight the specific characteristics of one area, how it stands out from others, and how those characteristics contribute to the area's overall character. You may refer to pieces like this as IWE.

However, a regional author rises to notoriety when his work is translated into other languages and takes on an international flavor, expanding the audience for regional literature throughout the globe. The stories, poems, novels, and folk tales of India's many regions, as well as those of the country's children, have a great deal of potential to appeal to a worldwide audience. The *Burhi Aair Xadhu* in Assamese is only one example of the enduring popularity of Indian folk stories for children throughout the globe. Despite the country's vast linguistic diversity, Hindi and English translations of Indian literature are woefully inadequate. Thus, the reasons behind India's literary success remain largely unexamined. Although Hindi is often referred to be "India's national language," many Indians take great satisfaction in speaking their own regional languages. Despite this, it is unclear how often high-quality works produced in other Indian languages get translated into Hindi and English. A high-quality English translation of the regional text will greatly enrich not just Indian literature but international literature as a whole.

As Vinay Dharwadker, the poet and critic has observed: "Indian-English literature by itself is inadequate to represent who are to the rest of the world. Only a broad representation of the full range of Indian literatures, translated into a world language such as English, can do what is needed." When it comes to books, spreading awareness is not a priority. It is crucial for tales from India to get ingrained in popular culture. When a work of Indian regional literature is translated into English, readers from all across the nation may enjoy it, not only those who are fluent in the original language or who are native to the area where the work was first published. There is a need for a translation because not enough people know that when Arundhati Roy presented the manuscript for *The God of Small Things* to a well-known Indian publisher, she was treated with little respect and offered almost no promotional materials for the book that would go on to be published in England and win her the Man Booker Prize.

In writing in Bengali, the native language rather than English, Mahasweta Devi has become a well-known and respected essayist, and she is seen as the personification of India's efforts to encourage its large literary community. After that, Tamil writer Perumal Murugan, a teacher and essayist whose sharp *Madhorubhagan* (2010) became popular, had it translated into English as *One Piece of Woman* and conveyed throughout the year until he was blamed significantly for his novel and kept proof against him in High Court, at which point he showed up at public titles, the English variation of his novel reaching the quick arrangement, the first written in one of India's nearby lingos to find public bold. The translation prize and the ILF Samanvay Bhasha Samman, the highest honor bestowed by the Indian Public Groundwork of Letters, were awarded to the remarkable person for their work in Indian languages. "Also up for consideration for the prestigious JCB Cost for Writing is N Kalyan Raman's translation of *Murugans Poonachi: Or the Story of a Dim Goat* from the Tamil. Using Srinath Perur's decipherment, the Kannada novella *Ghachar Ghochar* by Vivek Shanbag was awarded the Los Angeles Times Book Prize and the Worldwide Dublin Academic Honour; likewise, Shahnaz Habib's decipherment of Benjamin's Malayalam novel *Jasmine Days* was included in The New York Times' list of the best books of 2017."

Prior winners of the Crossword Interpretation Grant include Lakshmi Holmstrom for her work deciphering *Bamas Karruku*, Gita Krishnankutty for her work deciphering M. Mukundan's *Kesavan's Groans*, Arunava Sinha for his work deciphering Sankar's *Chowringhee*, Ira Pande for her work deciphering Monohar Shyam's *Tta Teacher*, M Translated by Fathima EV: A Mani Prologue. This is because, after being translated into English, his book has attracted a far wider audience, and it has even received a positive review in the New York Times. Therefore, there is a need for English translations of local texts describing acts of kindness, since this would attract a worldwide audience and provide a path to "authentic Indian literature."

Writing in English by an Indian cannot be regarded to be Indian writing since it lacks the local flavour, regional variation, and earthy aroma that define authentic Indian writing. People usually mean English when they speak of Indian writing, however the writing styles of regional languages like Bengali, Hindi, Tamil, Kannada, and Malayalam have always been more developed. I agree with Arunava Sinha, a well-known Indian translator of Bengali, that Indian literature written in languages other than English is far less likely to be inflated with the author's own importance than literature written in English. It is a lot more passionate and real, far more grounded

in the lives of the people it focuses on. Authors do not try to insert themselves as comic relief. There is something about reading English literature that draws greater attention to the text's surface.

While it is not always the case, everything works together well in this piece despite the fact that the writing is excellent and the content is honest. Sinha recommends K R Meera's *Hangwoman* (translated by J. Devika) for readers just starting off. Because of all the qualities that may be found in literature written in languages other than English. Until recently, writing in regional languages chokes to breathe and get attention in India but now it's time for regional literature critically worthy novels written in native languages are progressively more published in translation, aiding them go beyond their linguistic boundaries to find their wider audience. Writers who work in regional languages, however, are not given the same level of respect and attention as their English-language counterparts. Peter Ripkin, the director of the Frankfurt-based organization SPALA (Society for the Promotion of Asian, African, and Latin American Literature), has made the following observation: "Those who write in English continue to be viewed as the sole representatives of India's literary canon. Despite the rich diversity of regional literature, it has made little impact on the Western literary canon." Frankfurt Book Fair based in Germany, organization voiced much to promote regional literatures however only forty titles have been translated from Indian languages into Germany.

In 2006 book fair, among 55 works of Indian fiction translated into German in that, 14 were from regional languages rest are Indian fictions writing in English. An important reason why Indian regional writings and literature remain largely unknown in the west, according to the book fair organizer, is the absence of qualified translators. Still, it is heartening to know that, using *One Part Woman* as an example, Indian translation work has been elevated to a place where it may reach a wider audience across the nation despite these challenges and limitations. This wonderful regional literature of India needs the translators to pull out all the stops and show it to a global audience. "The irony is not lost on us that this process of interpretation, which is taking place in the colonizer's language of English, will ultimately result in a more Indian (colonized) society, as local interpretation groups may facilitate greater discussion between Indian dialects themselves by utilizing English as a vehicle to go across the world to spread India's wealth of provincial writing." In other words, the time has arrived for local writing to replace IWE as the gold standard of excellence.

Conclusion

I was wondering how many modern readers are doing so in their mother tongue. If the same text were translated into English, for example, some members of the westernized Indian class or the colonized minds might be interested in reading it. This is exactly what happened with *One Part Woman*; no one was aware of its existence before its translation into English, but the book quickly became the subject of heated debate afterward. It has been theorized by academics that one's native language is the most effective channel for both creative expression and acquiring new knowledge. Consequently, only Indian regional literature can be termed "real Indian literature;" this literature has also begun to develop, and its fragrant fruits will soon be enjoyed across the globe.

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