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### IDEOLOGICAL CONSTRUCTION IN ARAVIND ADIGA'S THE WHITE TIGER: A TRANSITIVITY ANALYSIS

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#### ABSTRACT

The current research paper tries to explore the ideological stance presented by author in an Indian novel, The White Tiger. Halliday's Transitivity System (2004) was employed to achieve the research objectives. The present study followed mix method approach practicing the qualitative and quantitative analysis of the selected clauses, simultaneously. After close reading of the text, ideologically fertile chunks were selected, tabulated, labelled, and finally interpreted in order to uncover the inherent ideological stance. Frequency indexes were made in order to quantify the occurrence of processes and the participants involved in these processes. The qualitative interpretations were made on the basis of quantified findings. The preference of material process over all other processes hints upon the construction of experiential world in the novel. Use of verbal processes helped the author to make intentional choices of lexical items which added symbolic and suggestive meanings in particular contexts. Overall the choice of different processes to describe certain happenings and the placement of the particular participants in the roles of actors, sayers, behavers, sensors, and carriers is made by the author to construe particular ideologies regarding identity, social classes, religion, gender and politics in particular.

## INTRODUCTION

Language and ideology are indispensable to each other. In every communication, some sort of ideology is shared through the medium of language. Same concept is reinforced by Bloor and Bloor (2004) “when people use language, their language acts produce – construct meaning”. (p. 2)

Fairclough (2001) claims that language “is a material form of ideology, and language is invested by ideology” (p.73). The term “ideology” refers to the sets of ideas, beliefs, practices, and representations which work in the interests of an identifiable social class or cultural group. Marx and Engels (1970) redefined ideology as a systematic distortion in the perception of social relations. Thompson (1990) describes ideology as “meaning in the service of power.” It refers to the use of language to construct power relations. Fairclough (1995) terms ideologies as certain propositions which often appear as hidden norms in texts which contribute to produce the relations of unequal power or dominance. Althusser (1969) claims that ideologies ‘interpellate’ individuals as subjects of particular sorts placing them in particular ‘positions’.

Lexical choices play key role in the construction of certain point of view in any text. As Fairclough (1989) argues that the variation in choices of vocabulary, grammar, organization of turn-taking while constructing language texts, written or spoken can make them ideologically significant. The writers are at liberty to share a particular domain of experience by embodying different ideologies through contrasting ways ‘wording’. There are three things which need to be considered while understanding the ideological effects.

- i) The processes of producing,
- ii) Interpreting the texts and
- iii) The texts

Balibar and Macherey (1974) state that literature being historically constituted in the bourgeois epoch is always loaded with the ideologies of that particular class. Brecht was first to theorize the ideological effect of identification produced by literature or rather by literary texts.

The present paper aims to examine and present the inherent ideologies construed in the text of the novel, *The White Tiger*, through the application of transitivity. Besides this, the present study intends to explore the experiential world as created by the author in the novel. Thus the language used in the novel by the author to create particular impact on the readers, is the major focus of the study in hand. The choice of words is also analyzed to observe the ways of the construction and presentation of certain ideologies in the novel. Furthermore the study explores the dominant processes in the text of the novel like Existential, Mental, Behavioural, Verbal, Relational or Material process and the impact of this dominance over the construction of the overall meaning of the text. As Eggins (2004) states that experiential meaning is expressed through the system of transitivity or process types.

As a pioneer and scholar in transitivity analysis, Halliday’s (1971) study of William Golding’s *The Inheritors* is an influential example. In this analysis,

Halliday points out how understanding grammar, especially transitivity, can help interpret the meaning in a literary text. According to Halliday’s theory, patterns of transitivity, including processes, participants, and the circumstances, occur in the clauses and sentences of a text. Halliday (1985) asserts that transitivity is the set of options whereby the speaker encodes his experience and transitivity is really the cornerstone of the semantic organization of experience. According to Halliday (1985), language expresses three main types of meanings simultaneously: ideational, interpersonal, and textual meanings. Among them, the ideational meaning (the clause as representation) serves for the expression of “content” in language which refers to our experience of the real world, including the experience of our inner world. The focus of current paper is only this ideational meaning as conveyed by the author of the novel. The interpersonal meaning helps to establish and maintain social relations whereas the textual meaning creates links between features of the text with elements in the context of situation.

Halliday and Matthiesen (1976) refer to the theme of clause as a “starting point of the message: it is what the clause is going to be about” (p. 64). With that, the theme serves to locate and orientate the clause within the context. The other part of the message that extends and elaborates the theme is the rheme. Therefore, a clause consists of both a theme and a rheme. Halliday also claims that the three types of meanings presented in language are not accidental but are necessarily in place because we need them to perform functions in social life. In the construction of experiential meaning, one major system of grammatical choices is involved i-e the system of transitivity or process type.

Halliday (1985) identifies transitivity as follows:

**Table:** Transitivity as an ideational function of language (Halliday, IFG 1985)

Material: Action Event	‘Doing’ ‘Doing’ Happening	Actor, Goal	She made the coffee.
Mental: Perception Affection Cogitation	‘Sensing’ ‘Seeing’ ‘Feeling’ ‘Thinking’	Sensor, Phenomenon	She saw the car. She forget his name/his name She liked his music/his music
Relational:  Attribution Identification	Seeing Attributing Identifying	Carrier, attribute Token, value	Maggie was our leader. Maggie was strong.
Behavioural	‘Behaving’	Behaver, range	She laughed.
Verbal	‘Saying’	Sayer, target	She replied.

Halliday (1985) observes that the “processes” expressed through language are the product of our conception of the world or point of view. He further notes that our conception of reality is based on the goings on whether it be related to

doing, happening, being, feeling or having etc. and these 'going ons' are expressed through the grammar of the clause. Through clause reflective and experiential meanings are expressed. The system expressing the 'going ons' through different types of processes is the system of transitivity (p.101). The semantic division of clauses has potentially three components:

- 1) The process itself, expressed by the verb phrase in a clause.
- 2) The participants in the clause, which are the one to do, behave, or say. Halliday used the term "participant entities" that is more relevant. (Halliday 1976: 160).
- 3) The circumstances as adverbial and prepositional phrases are to complete the meanings associated with the process. (Halliday 1985:101-102)

Analysis of these three elements through transitivity helps the readers to explore and comprehend the experiential world created through the use of language to convey some specific ideologies.

#### **ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION:**

The findings unfolded that material process is used in highest frequency. So first of all it is necessary to probe into the reason and significance of its frequent usage.

Great men like the Premier Jiabao are placed as actors who do the action of 'visiting' Bangalore. A good deal of protocol is being given to him that is shown by the use of material process. As a matter of practice, great people like the premier visiting Bangalore are welcomed warmly and with full protocol while there is no welcome or even no mentioning if the visitor is a person with low rank.

Use of material process is when one day the inspector 'comes' to the school for visit and 'pointed' his cane straight at Balram attributing him as most intelligent, honest and vivacious fellow in the crowd of thugs and idiots. When Balram answers him correctly "The White Tiger". He values him to be the same in this jungle. The use of this specific lexical item "The White tiger" is symbolic and full of ideological background. In mythology The White Tiger is one of the Four Symbols of the Chinese constellations. As a symbol of serene strength and power in Japan and China the White Tiger is a supernatural figure who presides over the Western, or autumn quadrant of the sky. So the author is quite successful in communicating the whole ideological context by using "The White Tiger" for Balram. Later he proves this title to be aptly used for him through the act of murdering his own employer and shifting his life track from darkness to the light of progress and prosperity.

At another place while talking about his ex-employer, Balram says, "because he (actor) borrowed many of his best ideas while 'driving' about but the things (actor) 'began' to sour between them later. The experiential world which is created in this relationship of employer and servant interacts with the real situations in the world around.

Balram gets his name from the school teacher not from his parents or any aunt or uncle from his family and when he tells his father that his teacher has given him a new name, his father (actor) 'shrugged' (Material Process) and accepts to call with that name. Later Balram 'picks up' (Material Process) a third name. Getting and picking name is about having the identity for one's whole life. His parents lack the vision to see the identity crisis which they unknowingly put upon their son who keeps on changing his identities through the whole text.

Another instance of material process illustrates that in the countries like India and Pakistan the concepts of being covered and passive are typically attached with women. The same is expressed here by the author that while talking to strange men, the women behave like this. 'Turning of eyes' to the ground and 'covering their heads' convey the unequal status of women cultural norms along with the signed by the society. The point to be noted is that the doer in all above discussed clauses is male; no female is placed at the position of actor. This implies the dominance of males in Indian society.

Ideology of religion through the use of material process is also located when Balram drives past and touches his eye and later justifies the action. This episode hints upon the author's intention to communicate about the contrasting attitudes of the poor and the rich about religion. He shares the social practices with the reader to show that how much religion is rooted in the lives of Indians. Louis Althusser (1971) mentioned religion as one of the Ideological State Apparatuses so it is quite impossible to ignore its impact and existence in people's everyday practices. Ashok and his wife belong to the urban areas and high social status while Balram is from Darkness with low social status so the difference of their beliefs and religious practices is shown through Balram's act of touching his eye to offer his respects to the temple and a sacred tree.

The ideology about the system of vote in India is presented through material process is also present in the episode when Balram (actor) 'got' a birthdate from the government. All of them on teashop had to be eighteen which is legal age to 'vote. He (actor) 'had got' a good price for each vote from the Great Socialist. So this is how the votes are being manipulated by the dominant politicians who pay for the votes and win unjustly. The role of teashop owner is important being at the position of actor as he is the one who takes money from politicians like Great Socialist and sells the votes of illiterate people who even don't realize that they are being used by such people

The author prefers to use material process to communicate the ideology of Rooster. from becoming innovators, experimenters, or entrepreneurs. It seems that the author has constructed this part of text for young Indians advising them that nothing will happen from anywhere else but everyman (actor) must 'make' his own Benaras.

By giving this account of action being done by the servants and overall people of India the author has exposed the reason of absence of any revolution in India. Further he suggests the young Indian to change their destinies by taking action at their own. The ideology of rooster coop is working successfully there only because of the passivity of young Indians and because of blind action by the

servants and common people in India who know only to follow, not to bring change of any sort.

***Ideologies presented through Mental Processes:***

The use of mental process is made by the author when he wants to give someone's perception, cognition or the feelings about any phenomenon. Balram as sensor sees the prime minister and his sidekicks (phenomenon) drive to the airport in black cars. He (sensor) wants to ask the premier directly if he is really coming to Bangalore as he doesn't find any other source reliable. Mr. Jiabao is on a mission. He (sensor) 'wants' to meet some Indian entrepreneurs and 'hear' the story of their success from their own lips. He (sensor) 'hopes' to learn how to make a few Chinese entrepreneurs (phenomenon). And if anyone (sensor) 'knows' the truth about Bangalore, it's only Balram. It made him (sensor) 'feel' good (phenomenon). He (sensor) 'decided' right there to write a letter to Mr. Premier. He (sensor) 'admires' the freedom loving nature (phenomenon) of Chinese nation. The ideology of entrepreneurship has been presented through 'great man about Bangalore' and 'its people' by placing them as sensors.

Balram (Sensor) learns all this from Mr. Ashok and his wife Pinky when they would sit in the car; he kept on listening to them. The author has expressed the process of Balram's cognition which illustrates the concept of filtration of ideology from upper social strata to the lower one; the same happens in case of Balram's learning. Mental process is employed while describing the symbol of Great Socialist's party which is a pair of hands breaking through handcuffs---symbolizing the poor shaking off the rich. The symbol itself stands for unity with commons but works quite opposite in practice.

So, the politicians like Great Socialist move and rule freely though they are not worthy for such responsibilities but the absence of law makes them successful. Through the use of mental process, the author has shared the perception, cognition and feelings of different sensors like Balram, Ashok, Premier Jiabao, the judges and the young people in Darkness.

***Ideologies presented through Verbal Processes:***

Balram says that none of us (neither Balram nor the Premier Jiabao) speaks English but there are things that can be said only in English. It reflects the real situation of our lives where English has to be used whether this is anyone's first language or not. If someone wants to be heard positively and on broader level i-e international, then English language is the only, most successful and most prestigious medium of communication. A thought from postcolonial era is being construed by showing such attitude towards the imposition of English on the colonized. The production of postcolonial literature also supports the thought where techniques of abrogation and appropriation can be found in response to English.

The use of English is shown in the text by three participants; first one is Pinky; an American, second is Ashok who is from high social class in India and the third is Balram who belongs to a lower social class and learning a bit of English

from them. This difference of language being used in different classes reflects of the situation in India and Pakistan. The ideology being communicated is about the usage of English by high and educated class while the low and uneducated looking high towards it and the distance and stretch which non-native speakers feel while using English but they have to do so.

A huge contrast can be traced if the verbiages said by the sayers are compared; like Balram tells and informs about persons, places, events, happenings in his life and overall India. Pinky madam and Mr. Ashok 'chat' about life, India and America in English. The young men in Darkness 'hum' a tune. The talk (verbiage) of Pinky and Ashok is quite different from the verbiage of the young men in Darkness. The gossip between Ram Persad and slanty eyed Nepali shows their compatibility and same thinking of the servants who like to talk about their employees.

### ***Ideologies presented through Behavioural Process:***

The behaviour of sighing is shown by Ashok while sympathizing with Indians like Balram about the situation of incompleteness or absence of education. It shows his concern with the majority of poor Indians while behaviour of laughing is shown by the school teacher when he gives name 'Balram' to Munna and tells him, his own name 'Karishna'. This behavior shows his delight on the coincidence of their names with the names of god Karishna and his sidekick Balram in mythology.

'They' (Behaver) refers to thousands of young men in Darkness who have` given up the fight against the injustice and inequality of the Government. Now 'they' spend their time sitting in teashop, humming a tune, or talking to a photo of film actress in their rooms instead of trying to get any job. They have stopped doing any effort for the development and betterment of their own selves. The eagerness to taste the Chinese liquor is shown by Balram (behave). Through this behaviour the author has shared with the reader about the common tendency of people giving importance or getting attracted towards the things which belong to others.

### ***Ideologies presented through Existential Process:***

Existential process is used by the author to communicate about the real existence of different phenomenon in the world. The ideology about the importance and existence of English as international language is communicated by the author. The people not having English as their native language are also bound to use English if they want to communicate with the whole world. The change in the identity of Balram is another reality which exists as Balram relates his naming episode. It hints upon the postmodern trend in which the identity of people is always in a state of flux. It is not something fixed but keeps on changing so Balram seems to be a postmodern character whose identity is constantly changing through the course of the novel.

The existence of job opportunities and chance to grow is there but the young men in Darkness do not try to explore and avail those chances while they waste

their time in useless activities and remain vacant and unemployed. Existential process is further employed to describe the existence of only two castes in India. The caste labels are given the worth of the destinies as people hear the name of caste and behave accordingly with the person. So the importance and strength of caste system is communicated by the author through the use of lexical item “destinies” as equivalent of the castes.

### ***Ideologies presented through Relational Attributive Process:***

An interesting aspect of the present study is to probe into the kind of attributes and values associated by the author with different participants as carrier and token. Attributes like being far ahead of Indians in terms of progress and great lovers of freedom and individual liberty are associated with Chinese to set contrast with Indians. Author has preferred to use Relational Attributive Process while talking about giving names of the Balram. The ideology about the filtration of ideas from bourgeois class to the lower one is reinforced that they cannot even think originally but only borrow and follow the ideas of people from upper strata of society by listening or remaining close to them.

Association of attributes like ‘half-baked’ with Balram builds a comparison of ways and results of upbringing in the cities and in the Darkness. The outlook of people of cities and Darkness are different because of the food and environment in which they are brought up. Even the liquors available there are specified for two different categories of people in India. The specification of English liquor for rich shares the deep-rooted ideology of colonized people about the supremacy of anything which belongs to English people. Whether it is English language or the English liquor, it is considered the asset of the rich people only. Balram is the only one who knows the truth about Bangalore. Balram values himself a lot as he is the one and only who knows the truth about the murder of his Ex- employer Mr. Ashok and it is only he who knows the story of his success in life by becoming an entrepreneur. The issue of identity is presented effectively by the author when he uses the relational identifying process while valuing Balram’s first name ‘munna’. The author successfully conveys the experiential world concerning identity through the use of relational identifying process that how it is handled in Darkness by the people like Balram’s parents and teacher. Further the Relational Identifying process is used by the author to share the importance of caste system in Darkness. ‘They’re Halwais.’ Caste is the identity of a person and on the basis of caste certain amount of respect is given. In this way author gives a vivid account of the ideology of caste system in India. People respect and recognize the worth of an individual by keeping his caste in mind.

The Great Socialist is identified as ‘the boss of Darkness’ as he has ruled and will rule further in Darkness. He has got no competitors there because he applies all the tactics to win. Using Relational Identifying Process, the author identifies the men of city Bangalore as animals because of whom the working girls find themselves insecure while going to their work places late at nights and early in the mornings. And this situation of insecurity provides bright chances for the business of people like Balram who provide secure transport services at odd hours even.



Balram is put in the position of possessor who possesses something important to tell to the Chinese prime minister. A comparison of possessions is also given by the author putting the Chinese and India in place of possessors. A close look at the nature of possessions show that the things which China possesses are positive while the things which India possesses are negative in their nature.

All of them' refers to the photos of SUVs, drivers, garages, mechanics, paid police men which can be seen on the screen of Munna's Macintosh laptop. All these are the possession of Munna (possessor) now which communicates that his escape is successful and he has broken through that Rooster coop in which all others are still hanged up. He proved to be the White Tiger who has brought change in his life by using all energies and means which led him towards success.

### CONCLUSION

The presence and intentional construal of certain ideologies by the author became obvious after the analysis. The researcher was able to detect the following ideologies from the selected chunks after analysis: the division of Indians into two distinct categories, the reliability of communication resources in India, the contrastive attitudes towards the issues of identity, naming and caste system in Darkness and in city, the role of women in the Indian society, the filtration of ideas, literature and all ideologies from upper social strata to the lower one, the compulsion and prestige given to English language and the attitude of non-native speakers towards its usage, the realistic comparison of the possessions of India and China, the truth about the production and evolution of entrepreneurs in India, the superiority of British, English language and America and the behavior of the marginalized towards this superiority, the Rooster coop working in India, the corruption engrossed in the political system, the false and hollow democracy, the contrast in the division of opportunities of jobs and education for city and Darkness, the performance of police department, the savage nature of men, the exploitation of oblivious and simpleton people by the Cunningss like Great Socialist.

The findings told that material process was the most dominant one in the whole text. This dominance of material process signifies the author's focus on the actions, their nature and the participants of these actions. The researcher also found the nature of attributes and values carried and associated with their participants while analyzing the relational process which was used frequently by the author. The types of attributes attached with certain participants, conveys the author's point of view about those participants. In this way the choice of different processes to describe certain actions and the placement of the participants in the roles of actors, sayers, behavers, sensors, and carriers is made by the author to construe particular ideologies effectively and successfully in the text.

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