

## Research Article

# Cultural divergence in Sujata Bhatt's poem "Search for My Tongue"

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## ABSTRACT

This research paper deals with the culture object in Sujata Bhatt's poem "SEARCH FOR MY TONGUE". Sujatha Bhatt was born in Gujarat and immigrated to the United States. The persons who admire poetry are aware of what's going around the world which gives muse to write poems, and sometimes they write poem that connect those to their culture. The present study depicts the life of immigrants who experience the specific tension. Like the speaker Sujata Bhatt, they try to adjust their life in a new country, without forgetting where they come from(native). Sujata also explores how immigrants must often negotiate between supposedly irreconcilable cultural identities, their own, and that of dominant culture which they belong. It also slides on how the dominant culture can threaten to erode an immigrant's identity. People migrate primarily for social and economical reasons that causes a wide gap between the culture and traditions they follow. Being an Indian, the poet tells her trauma of adapting herself to a new culture. "Search for my tongue" is a poem by Sujata Bhatt, here, the poet includes English and Gujarati lines. Bhatt herself as an immigrant explores how hard it is to adapt to a new culture. The pressure of assimilation and the association between the language and identity fades the native culture. The poet tells her second language overtakes her mother language; the loss of native language would be a loss of her heritage and sense of self- identity which can diminish the culture. Towards the finish of the poem, she witnesses herself, that her primary language had a quality to tie a bunch on her second, going to be her local language appears to have revived her. The euphoric finish of the poem reaffirms the association between language, personality, and self articulation proposing that by utilizing her native language, the speaker has recovered a piece of herself from migration and absorption. She likewise proposes other immigrants, to build up another far off character that incorporates both of their social and cultural experiences.

**Key words:** Immigration, Cultural, Native, Self-Identity

## INTRODUCTION

"Search for my tongue" is a poem by Sujata Bhatt. Sujata Bhatt was born in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. Later, she immigrated to the United States along with her family. She started her occupation as a translator, translated Gujarati poetry into English language for the publication of book named "Penguin Anthology of Contemporary Indian Women Poets". Combining Gujarati and English, Bhatt writes "Indian-English" poetry. This poem deals with personal and social identity and contains some Gujarati lines. This poem is about how albeit the writer, has to be settled on another country and no longer, at this point needs her native language, she actually thinks back about it and stresses that she may lose the track of her "Cultural identity". It is about how her mother tongue feels unused and her new dialect she has gotten, has assumed control over her "native" language. Nonetheless, when she dozes, the poet dreams in Gujarati, she recalls her "mother tongue" once more. Cultural Identity is essential for an individual's self-origination and self-discernment and it is related to identity, nationality, religion, social class, age, territory or any sort of gathering of people that has its own particular culture. Along these lines, cultural identity is both trait of the individual as same as the group.

Bhatt utilizes a combination of language in her poem "Search for my tongue". Bhatt uses a metaphorical language,

comparing the mother tongue to indeterminate kind of "plant"; and by implication, the foreign language to unspecified "weed or parasite". The poet also uses personification to relate "mother tongue" to "human", develops the sense of patriotism towards the nation, depicts the fact more pragmatically to readers.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE POEM

*"And if you lived in a place you had to  
Speak a foreign tongue,  
Your mother tongue would rot,  
Rot and die in your mouth  
Until you had to spit it out.  
I thought I spit it out"*

The structure of the poem expresses the poet's feeling and ideas about identity. In 'Search for my tongue' Bhatt speaks of three-part in the poem which symbolises the poet's feelings about her split identity and also denotes how it is difficult of being eloquent in two languages are expressed primarily in first stanza. 'You could not use them both together, even if you thought that way'. There is solid symbolism in the poem which addresses the poet's sentiments about her separation from mother land. She envisions that realizing two dialects resembles having two tongues she compares her tongue to a flower: 'would rot and die, it grows back, grows strong veins'.

There are two central themes created throughout the poem which contrast each other. The first being the mother tongue, get rotting and dying as the other foreign tongue takes over. It contrasts greatly with the second image which is more incontrovertible and pleasant; her mother tongue evokes and blooms, shoots up like a 'plant'. She is pleased when she realised: 'every time I think I have forgotten, I think I've lost the mother tongue, it blossoms out of my mouth.'

Lines 17-30 are written in Gujarati language. In one hand, the use of Gujarati language permits the individuals who aren't bilingual to likewise identify the poem who connects empathically towards the poem. On the other hand, the utilization of another dialect can be a method of disorientating the reader, as the individuals who are not bilingual would not understand. The Gujarati portion of the poem shows us her native language outwardly and underscores the distinction from English (Rekha & Rafee, 2017). Metaphorical language is utilized in the poem to show thoughts regarding cultural identity. The poet's tongue is depicted as human who can probably rot.

Immigrants when leaving their country also leave their dear and bosom family, friends, support network, and culture. At the point when they show up in another country, numerous vulnerabilities including the method of living new laws, new social standards, language or complement issues, conceivable bigotry, and other exclusionary conduct causes them to feel awkward here and there, sometimes they long to return to their local country. The artist also feels terrible about her unusable native language in another country (Sandten, 2000).

In the poem, "Search for my tongue" there is an all-inclusive allegory of her tongue resembling like a flower blooming in her mouth. The author reveals the concept of migration, cultural bereavement and cultural identity, and explores the interrelationship between these three aspects transient's experience and cultural congruity. The unpredictable interchange of the relocation, social and cultural loss, personality, and social congruity, alongside, social and cultural components, are guessed as assuming a significant

part in Bhatt's poem. Culture is the important factor in molding an individual's identity (Mehrotra, 2001). Being an immigrant, loneliness as a kind of alienation, is found in the absence of contact with others, in the same way Bhatt makes a sense of losing her mother tongue when there's nobody could understand her native language in the immigrated country, where she uses only English as her language of living.

## CONCLUSION

The poetic lines that take place in middle in Gujarati language. Bhatt reassures the unknown listener that her mother tongue is still there – and growing, in fact. While explaining what happens when she dreams, she uses her mother tongue without hesitation, not minding whether people will or will not understand. She says that she uses Gujarati language to express her confidence, loyalty and love to her mother tongue and her identity. However, with being thrown into speaking another language, it would be discomfoting to suddenly be exposed to another language. Cultural Identity is a significant supporter of individuals' wellbeing. Identifying with a specific culture gives individuals' feeling of having a place and security. The poem indirectly speaks about the experience of colonialism and displacement. The lost language can be viewed as illustrative at the loss of social and cultural heritage, values and perspectives.

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