

LANGUAGE AND CULTURE IN THE NOVEL 'DARK HORSE'

Dr. Shankar Ranba Dalvi

Professor and Head, Hindi Department,
Rajarshi Shahu Arts and Commerce College, Rukdi

Email: shankardalavi1266@gmail.com

ABSTRACT:

The language of human society moves forward at its own pace, carrying civilization, conduct, thoughts and culture. Although it is also true that the environment also has a great impact on language. But in natural circumstances, man's language, knowledge, beliefs, customs, art, craft, philosophy, literature, rules and regulations, value system, lifestyle, social institutions, religious rituals, festivals, attitude towards others and all the things related to these come together, which form a specific system. When Santosh, the hero of 'Dark Horse', comes to Delhi for the first time, he reaches Mukherjee Nagar of his dreams. The author has called Santosh the dark horse. There is a dark horse inside us too, what is needed is the will to keep it running. At the end of the novel, the author gives the analogy of a dark horse to the readers by saying who will be the next dark horse, maybe it is you. Similarly, this is the story of every struggling student who leaves their homes to achieve success and comes into the wider world. Dark Horse is a struggle-filled but true picture. The problems arising in the preparation of the exam, the struggle of the students at all levels, the struggle of food, intellect and spontaneity, from the lifestyle to the language, there is also the struggle of purity and rusticity. Coming from the village, the compromise with the urban culture is mostly shown. There is a struggle in the dialogue between father and son. Overall, the best part of this book is the language. Which many people will not like. The author is very honest towards the language of the book. It has been kept very natural, the language is Hindi which takes us to Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. Which may hurt some people. Overall, this is a successful novel.

KEYWORDS: language, culture, novel, social institutions, festivals, religious etc.

INTRODUCTION:

Language is a part of culture. Just as we take our sanskar, behaviour, traditions etc. from our parents, similarly language is also passed on as an inheritance from one generation to the next. Although it is also true that environment also has a great impact on language. But in natural circumstances, man's language, knowledge, beliefs, customs, art, craft, philosophy, literature, rules and regulations, value system, lifestyle, social institutions, religious rituals, festivals, attitude towards others and all the things related to these come together, which form a specific system. Culture has a deep impact on a person's behaviour, beliefs and value consciousness. With which he lives his life. Culture has a deep connection with country, nation and time. From this point of view, rapid changes in language and culture are seen in the literature of the 21st century. In Niloptal Mrinal's novel 'Dark Horse', the changing environment of village and city is clearly visible. On the basis of language and culture, a student is seen preparing for a great dream. Civil service examination is considered to be the most difficult in the world. The number of aspirants appearing for civil service examination is very high in India. But the number of those who succeed in it is very less. The youth is attracted to it because of its fight against corruption, evil and bribery and because of government jobs, economic income, power and reputation in the society. On this, young writer Niloptal Mrinal has tried to paint a struggle-filled but true picture on the culture of the city and village through the novel 'Dark Horse'. The writer himself kept appearing for the examination continuously for 8 years while living in Mukherjee Nagar, Delhi since 2008, but could not succeed. Then he stepped into the world of writing and wrote his first novel 'Dark Horse' in 2015. Which received the Sahitya Akademi Yuva Puraskar in 2016. Currently, it is the highest selling book, whose number is close to one million i.e. 10 lakhs. He wrote this novel in 9 days and after that he participated in the book fair in Delhi. His book was published there.

He talked to people to publish his book but about 28 publishers refused to publish it. Then he contacted Hindi Yugam Prakashan through Facebook and the book got published. The changing form of the novel *Dark Horse* is clearly visible in the perspective of language and culture.

The novel '*Dark Horse*' focuses on students preparing for the civil services. It is a document of candidates who are constantly working towards their goals while living around Mukherjee Nagar in Delhi. The struggle of village parents, values, beliefs and the deep influence of culture are visible in the novel. The author says about the importance of IAS - "You can make your career by becoming a doctor. You can make your career by becoming an engineer, but if you want to make a career for yourself as well as for many generations, then you have to become an IAS. This was a common thought which was present in almost every small and big town or village of the Hindi belt. Perhaps the imagination of helping three-four generations cross the Vaitarni on the back of a successful boy had made IAS the dream of every educated family."¹ In this way, all the students are addicted to this exam. The main character of this novel, Santosh, comes to Delhi from Bhagalpur in Bihar to prepare for the civil service. Santosh had recently passed B.A. in History. Many parents like Santosh want to see their son successful by themselves by going through immense hardships. They send their son away so that he can do something big in life.

The most special thing about the writer in the novel is that he has not cut the tongue of his characters. The characters speak whenever they want. Like abusing, he has allowed them to speak the good and bad thoughts going on in their minds. This authenticity is possible only in real writing. All the characters of this novel sometimes get carried away by the temptation of girls, intoxication and wrong suggestions. They have only that much control that they cross the river (target). In this temptation, some are able to control themselves, some drown, while some characters keep drowning and some come out. Rai sahab takes Santosh to a coaching named 'Lok Sevak Maker' in Batra. There, he gets so enamoured by the beauty of the receptionist Manmohini sitting at the counter that he leaves his favourite subjects History and Hindi and starts taking the Lok Sevak Maker suggested by Manmohini.

He chooses Administration and Sociology as his subjects. Later, he has to change his subject. Later, he also gets carried away by this youthful flow for Vidisha. In this flow, a mature character like Guru also gets carried away by the love for Mayurakshi. Both are dedicated to each other's struggle for success. When Manohar, this young man, comes to Delhi for the first time for Payal, he reaches the Mukherjee Nagar of his dreams. The author makes him sit on the top floor window of the building in this Mukherjee Nagar. He tells us all the stories of the birds in every room, which he takes from far to the rooms of the boys preparing for IAS and takes you around from room to room and does not leave you until you understand the ground of preparation for a great dream and at the same time the philosophy of this life. All the characters are included in this. In which one Rai sahab is himself giving the UPSC exam and he has inspired Santosh to come to Delhi to prepare for UPSC. In the end, he goes back after failing. Second one character is- Guru an experienced UPSC aspirant, who has already reached PT, Mains and Meeting multiple times. He speaks very directly and clearly, sometimes this character seems like the author himself. Manohar, who is Santosh's friend, is a rich businessman preparing for UPSC. Along with him, characters like Rustam, Payal, Mayurakshi, Vidisha, Bharat, Vimalendu etc. leave their mark. The language of all these people creates the atmosphere of Purbiya dialect. The entire Purbistan has gathered at Batra place by eating, writing and reading. All these characters who have been following the Vaishnava tradition for years become compromisers as soon as they come to Delhi. With time, a change is seen in the society in terms of language and culture. Here one experiences the fact that 'water changes every mile, language changes every four miles'. When one leaves his region, society and village culture and goes to a metropolitan culture, then the culture, civilization, speech and dress of that society are different from it. Santosh experiences this as soon as he reaches Delhi. When he meets an old man at the ticket counter. He is standing with heavy luggage, while Santosh holds the luggage with a sense of belonging. Then the old man says, "Son, leave the bag. Go to the back and join the line. The line will keep getting longer. You don't need to hold the bag."² Behind the back

The old man abuses him. Santosh remembers the old and senior people of the village who used to bless him on being called uncle. Here he has to face abuses. Due to this, he considers these classes to be wrong in Delhi, but remains enthusiastic about Rayni. While living in the city, many people gradually shed the garb of their culture and civilization. They forget their own culture and civilization and start considering themselves big people by wearing the garb of external cultures and civilizations. Niloptal Mrinal has given a clear answer to this through Bharat in the novel. Manohar's uncle comes to AIIMS hospital for kidney treatment. Then after roaming around Delhi for two days, Manohar brings his uncle to meet his friends. There he meets friends like Santosh, Raisaheb, Bharat. Then Bharat, who supports western civilization, smokes a cigarette in front of his uncle and tells him - "Oh uncle, I have been drinking since 10th, actually everyone used to drink in our hostel. Yes, but smoking should not be excessive. I also drink, but only within limits."³ Bharat has a good knowledge of English language and he supports western culture. This makes Manohar's uncle say to him while going to the village - "Son, your English newspaper, English songs, English singers are fine but you have become too English. We have also seen English bottles under the bed in your room. Keep the English medium a little less. Wait, Hindi is fine, understand. If you have too much mental stress, then go back home and take care of your father-uncle's business. You have studied enough."⁴ Uncle vents out all his anger on Manohar at once. Manohar apologizes for his mistake and is embarrassed. The writer removes the cloak of city culture and civilization from uncle's mouth.

Through Guru, the author shows the change in language and culture. Guru says that knowing and understanding through Hindi or English is knowledge. Language is to communicate the knowledge of things you know and understand. If speaking and writing in English is knowledge, then there should be no schools in America and England. Burger sellers in England should also become IAS. Guru says- "Bharat Kumar ji, English is a working language of the world, it should be learned. We have no objection to this, but it will not be digested to hear that English is the basis of life and the most working. Language is only a medium of communication, let it remain the same."⁵ Going further, Guru is specific about the change in culture- "Hindi and English Since when have you made me the representative of two cultures! You are from an English medium, what is so special in you that is so different from the culture of Ara or Bihar! Don't you drink Satua? Don't you eat Thekua? Don't you heat Borsi? Doesn't your grandfather wear a dhoti? Doesn't your father apply mustard oil on it? Ganga-Jamuni culture, Ram-Rahim culture, Ishwar-Allah culture, Kheer-Sevai culture, all this is our culture. This is the only culture of both Hindi and English speaking people of this country."⁶ Similarly, while speaking on language and culture, Guru says to Manohar, "Language is important, English is the language of business, Urdu is the language of love and Hindi is the language of behaviour."⁷ The writer has kept the flow of language according to the time and the state of mind of the character.

The students preparing for civil services also had a special class consciousness about themselves. The author says about it - "There were two types of classes in this country. One special class is the one that eats bread, and the other general class is the one that eats roti. But apart from these two, there was a class of civil students who were eating bread now with the money sent from home but were worried about bread in the future."⁸ In this way, this class lives between the special and the common. It becomes special by passing the three-stage examination in which if it fails, it loses and breaks down. So, outside, only friends are there in physical form to encourage and console them. All those who take the civil exams console each other and motivate them to struggle for their goal again. In this way, when Santosh fails in his first PT examination, his father consoles him. But the next time, some of the father's hopes are shattered. He asks him to come back to the village. A person living in a village can help his son only in a limited way, because he has the ability but not the means.

When Vimlendu becomes an IAS, his father becomes happy. The minister comes to his door and gives him four categories and a petrol pump and wants to get his daughter married in their house. The same father wants to tell this to Vimlendu happily. Before that, he fixes his own marriage with Ritupurna Mahapatra from Orissa, whom he met at the training center. Vimlendu goes to his in-laws' house even

before his son and daughter-in-law return home. In the high society in which his wife loves a dog more than him. This change in culture seems bad. Manohar and Guru get scared when Santosh suddenly disappears after failing PT twice. But he does not choose suicide and leaves the room and disappears. Before this, Guru had taught Santosh to capable teachers like Shyamal Kishore of history and Harshvardhan Chauhan of Hindi literature.

When the result comes after the third interview, Santosh's picture is seen on the floor of Guru Batra Cinema with IPS written next to it. Guru calls Manohar and tells him that Santosh proved to be a 'dark horse'. Manohar asks the meaning of dark horse, so Guru says - 'Dark horse means a horse running in a race on which no one has placed a bet, on which no one expects to win and that horse leaves everyone behind and goes ahead, then that is the dark horse my friend. Santosh is an unexpected winner.'⁹ Santosh was missing from Mukherjee Nagar but he keeps in touch with both the teachers. Santosh finally tells this to Guru and Manohar and Guru and Manohar go back to the village. Similarly, after 6 years, Manohar has opened a cement factory in his village. He is married and he is watching TV with his wife that Guru is giving a speech as a national leader. So there he tells his wife that another dark horse who fails the exam in the last attempt and becomes a dark horse. In this way, the author says that there is a dark horse sitting inside everyone, all that is needed is the will to keep it running. By saying who will be the next dark horse, if not you, then at the end of the novel, the author gives the analogy of a dark horse to the readers. Similarly, this is the story of every struggling student who leaves their homes and comes into the wider world to achieve success.

CONCLUSION:

'Dark Horse' is a struggle but true picture of the culture of the city, rather of the village, the problems faced in preparing for the exams, the struggle of the students at all levels, the struggle of food, intellect and simplicity, from the lifestyle to the language, there is also the struggle of purity and rusticity. Coming from the village, the compromise with the urban culture is mostly shown. There is a struggle in the dialogue between father and son. Overall, the best part of this book is the language, which many people will not like. The author is very honest towards the language of the book. It has been kept very natural, the language is Hindi which takes us to Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. Wherever necessary, the word and has been used. Which may also offend some people. To conclude, It is a wonderful experience to read rich material in such an easy and natural language. This novel has been made dependent on the regional life of struggle, fun, jokes, experiences, sour-sweet etc.

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