

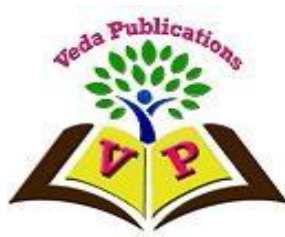
BYE- ORBI-LINGUALISM: TEACHER VIEWS ON USING BILINGUAL METHOD IN ESL CLASSROOM

SufiyaNaheed^{1*}, M. R. Vishwanathan²

^{1*} (PhD scholar, National Institute of Technology Warangal- 506004.)

² (Assistant professor of English, National Institute of Technology Warangal-506004)

ABSTRACT



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Bilingualism is making a comeback in the second language classrooms in India and it is no surprise considering that knowledge of more languages than one is the norm rather than exception in most parts of the globe while the teaching methods recommended to teach English, thanks to imports from the developed countries in the form of materials and expertise, often overlooks the simple fact that conditions under which English is taught in monolingual countries is vastly different from conditions where English is taught and learnt as a second or foreign language. It is rational therefore to interrogate the conditions under which English is taught to students learning it as a second language, particularly in light of their socio economic background. This paper is the outcome of a study that sought the views of teachers in using L1 as a scaffold to teach L2. It is predicated on the belief that L1 if used judiciously and sensibly will actually aid language learning instead of hindering it. The paper sought the views of teachers to bilingualism to establish their opinions regarding the use of mother tongue as a resource and the questionnaire was an instrument that established how well teachers were aware of using mother tongue to teach English. The conclusion reached is that some efforts must be expended towards inclusion of mother tongue as scaffolding in L2 teaching.

Keywords: L1 Teaching, L2 Acquisition, Scaffolding, Language Learning, School Curriculum

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INTRODUCTION

It is a truism that in India one needs to have English in their repertoire of languages if one is to make something of oneself in life! That English is seen as a passport to success and gainful employment is evidence of its indispensability to every Indian. The socioeconomically disadvantaged sections of society see in English language a way out of poverty, as captured very well in this observation by Rama Mathew (1997):

A school attached to a central university, which offers only English medium education to children of its employees (both teaching and nonteaching), tried to find out from parents how many would like a mother tongue medium stream, since experience had shown that for a majority of the students English-medium education was difficult. The response showed that the parents were not willing to accept a change, because they wanted their children to get better jobs than they had themselves (personal communication with the English teacher of the school) (p.167)

The popularity of English and the necessity of learning it have percolated to the most wretched of the earth that see English language as a saviour of the downtrodden. While there cannot be two opinions over the teaching of English as a second or third language in India, what has often bred controversy is the method recommended to teach it.

THE STUDY

The study was carried out in three schools all of which offer English medium instruction and differ only in ownership; while one is a *Kendriya Vidyalaya*— central school affiliated to CBSE- another is a *Navodaya Vidyalaya* and the third one a private school. All three schools have suitably qualified teachers to teach English and data was collected from 8 teachers regarding their views on bilingual education. This is important in that across the globe the hegemony of one or a few languages and the death or step motherly treatment to indigenous languages is being treated with alarm and measures are being initiated to give local languages the respect they deserve. The most important aspect however is

the way English is taught and learnt in schools and colleges across the country. There was a time when it was absolutely legitimate to teach English using mother tongue but with changing times and the import of materials and methods into the system, anything that bear the imprint of the UK or the USA is given attention, pushing to the backstage tried and tested indigenous ways of learning and teaching.

An example will confirm the truth of the argument. Consider, for example, the monolingual tenet imported from Britain and in vogue since the time it was introduced to teach English to natives (i.e. Indians)). The “Use-Only-English” regime that’s actively promoted in some schools even today has its roots in colonialism when the teachers of English were Englishmen who did not speak the language of Indians but who wanted the natives to learn English through English.

It suited the agenda of the British well to ask Indians to struggle in their attempts to communicate in a language that was alien to them. Unfortunately the rules of the game laid down by the erstwhile colonisers refuse to go away and are preached to this day in schools in India. This is one instance of cultural politics at work: internalising a rule imposed by an outside agency for its own selfish purposes.

The monolingual tenet condemns first generation learner to silence since mother tongue use is forbidden and the learner with little or no resources cannot fall back on anything to learn a second language. Similarly, learners who may want to use L1 in the initial stages of language learning so that they may overcome shyness or embarrassment are compelled to use L2 from the time they are taught it with the result that they may concede defeat out of sheer frustration or helplessness. Learners who are in straitened circumstance and cannot afford audio visual material needed to practise speaking may find themselves competing on unequal terms with those who have all the facilities.

Thus the outcome of using “Use only English” in the second language classroom will be learners who were unable to master a world language because of the false premise that English is best taught and learnt through English, the mother tongue being seen as unhelpful in teaching L2.



To ensure mother tongue is given the respect and place it richly deserves in the second language classroom, eight teachers employed in three schools were interviewed and asked to fill out a questionnaire about their views on bilingual method in the L2 class. Of the teachers data was collected from, two were from *Kendriya Vidyalaya*, three from *Navodaya Vidyalaya* and three from a school under private management. Those in the 25-30 age group were five in number while those in the 36-45 age groups were three. Surprisingly, only one teacher from among the 25-30 age groups had an MA while all three in the latter age groups had an MA. There was one teacher with six plus years of experience, two with three plus years while the remaining had between a few months to less than two years.

The teachers took part in a chat to voice their views on bilingualism and bilingual education; the teachers were polite, friendly, and willing to experiment with new and imaginative methods of teaching. They agreed that something needed to be done to get the weak or underperforming learners on an equal footing with their better performing counterparts and as far as language teaching went, it was very useful to use bilingual method to teach though they also cited situational constraints as the primary reason for the "non-use" of the method.

All the teachers agreed that bilingual method was highly recommended to:

- (a) Define new vocabulary
- (b) Teach new phrases and idiomatic expressions
- (c) Explain difficult/abstract concepts or ideas

When asked whether they used the bilingual method often or only rarely, six teachers replied that they used it as often as occasion demanded while two expressed reservations about using the method. Teachers who answered in the affirmative did express that it was always done on the sly, with the threat of being "found out" real and disappointing. Given below are some of the reasons why teachers claimed they needed to be very cautious in using mother tongue while teaching English, even if they endorsed its usefulness in taking English to the learners far more effectively than using only English to teach English.

SITUATIONAL CONSTRAINTS IN THE USE OF BILINGUAL METHOD

(a) TEACHERS' LIMITED COMPETENCE IN L1

Teachers expressed a startling but predictable fact: their own limited command of an L1. Those who spoke or used Telugu or Hindi said that they were themselves ashamed to find that they did not *have* - meaning *know* - all the words or phrasal verbs in their own language to be able to convey them to students. Teachers also confessed that they were themselves so used to English phrases and expressions that they expected their students to know these too.

(b) MANAGEMENT DEMANDS

The school managements in particular demand that students be compelled to use only English except in first language classes. This trend is prevalent in schools run by private management and not in Central schools or *Navodaya Vidyalayas* where the teacher has greater leeway. In schools that are run by private parties, the only rule is "English through English" and the reason given is that parents spend their hard earned money for an English medium education for their children the purpose of which is defeated if mother tongue were to intervene!

(c) HETEROGENOUS COMPOSITION OF STUDENTS

In a multilingual country; like India, teacher ability to use an L1 is stunted not only by their own limited command of the language but also by the number of languages that function as L1 for students. In *Kendriya Vidyalayas*, where children of central government employees study, the classroom one encounters is truly multilingual with the only possible L1 for communication being Hindi, which again may not live up to its promise given to geographical and other constraints.

(d) PARENTAL EXPECTATIONS

Parents also harbour the misguided belief that the more English one is taught, the better the results. They have no use for teachers who seek recourse to the students' L1 since that is seen as retrogressive because mother tongue being mother tongue, is used all the time while English, a foreign language to many, needs mastering and that they



believe is only possible through extensive practice in English!

(e)LEARNER EXPECTATIONS

Students themselves are not always happy with the use of mother tongue to teach another tongue, which they see as teacher incompetence or incomplete mastery of English! Much like the rest students harbour the same misguided assumption that they were weak in English because they don't speak it or use it and the injection of Telugu or Tamil or Hindi will only make their inability to use English worse.

This phenomenon is by no means restricted only to India or Sri Lanka. Joseph and Ramani actually tried introducing the bilingual method in South African classrooms to learners in the belief that competence in one's own mother tongue was equally important, a move that backfired! This was because the attempts were resisted by the learners themselves. In their words:

While tolerating the group discussion in their own languages, they questioned the value of the written tasks. Many of them asserted 'We are here to learn English!' Our counter argument that developing literacy in their home languages was also important did not impress them. They saw time spent on structured activities in their own languages as time taken away from English (1998, pp.217-18).

CONCLUSION

Thanks to the "growing consciousness within ELT of multilingualism circles of the recognition of multilingualism, and of the hegemonic and dangerous role English plays in denying it (Joseph and Ramani, 1998, p.214), we can at least encourage some positive efforts in acknowledging the role of our own languages in helping learners cope with and master English as a second language. It is essential that some efforts be made to incorporate L1 use, no matter how limited, so that local languages thrive and students appreciate their own tongues while learning a foreign/second language. The complexity of L1 and L2 learning-cum-competency acquisition at schooling level can be summed up with the opinion of Phillipson (1996)

Multilingual schooling is a complex topic, that it is difficult to do justice to briefly, but the important issue is that in a multilingual society, education should be multilingual rather than 'X-medium' or 'Y-medium', terms which implicitly exclude or subtract languages(p.165).

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STUDENT PERSPECTIVE ABOUT BILINGUAL METHOD IN THE ESL CLASSROOM: A STUDY

SUFIYA NAHEED, Dr. M. RAJA VISHWANATHAN

Department of Humanities and Social Sciences
National Institute of Technology, Warangal



ABSTRACT

While the benefits of multilingual Education are numerous and beneficial to students, the tendency to teach a second Language using limited or no recourse to the students 4 continues to remain a mystery. As far back as 1992, Phillipson brought this to light and termed it *monolingual fallacy*, a term that is not just appropriate but on accurate description of what obtains in schools and colleges, where English is used to teach English despite there being a common language that teachers and learners share; it is rather ironical that the stakeholders who matter most in the teaching-learning process- students themselves- are often left out of the equation. To determine the opinions of students themselves to idea of using bilingual method in the classroom, a survey was undertaken and the results analyzed for discussion. Data analysis reveal that students are inclined favourably to the idea of bilingual method as they believe it aids comprehension better. The article also looks at some of the putative but misguided excuses for swearing allegiance to monolingual fallacy.

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The study

To gauge the reaction of students to the use of bilingual method by teachers in the ESL classroom, a study was conducted which saw the active participation of 44 students, drawn from Kendriya Vidyalaya, Navodaya Vidyalaya and a private school offering education in English medium. The rationale for the investigation emerged out of an unexpected incident the researcher had when teaching a prose piece for students. The researcher who is a teacher in a private school decided to use Telugu and occasionally Hindi to explain difficult or abstract passages in the lesson and reaction/response of students to this was pleasantly surprising. They welcomed it if their enthusiastic response to questions

asked was any indication. Their delighted faces was proof positive that using the mother tongue was not a bad idea at all.

The study was conducted in a systematic manner with personal interviews, questionnaires and classroom observation comprising instruments of data collection. In general information was sought on the students' "general background in English, aspects of learning English that they liked or did not like, the advantages that fluency in English would bring them,..." (Ramanathan, 1999, p.218) as well as the occasions and people they got to speak English with, the sources they relied on to hone their spoken and written English and the idea of teaching English through mother tongue/4.

The learners were in the age group of 12-14 years and were middle school students. While 27 were male learners, 17 were female. Learners had been learning English as a second language for 7 years and their competence in spoken English did not attest to their Longevity in using English. One of the reasons could be that it was the teachers who used English extensively while the learners had been restricted to using English to prepare for exams, and spoken English is not a tested component.

Classroom observations prior to data collection revealed that while many students seemed able to Comprehend the text, there was a general opinion among them that the teacher could have used L1 to explain the text and invite greater and more meaningful participation from students. Informal chat was followed by administration of the questionnaire, the analysis of which I presented in the following sections!

When asked who they mostly used English with to communicate, the majority of learners replied that they used English to communicate with the teacher; only 6(13.8%) claimed they used English with friends and classmates. Personal observation reveals that in Kendriya Vidyalayas and Navodaya Vidyalayas which has students from across the country, Hindi is the preferred language of communication. English is only used when the speaker is unable to follow Hindi or when there is conscious attempt to use English alongside Hindi and/or local language.

When asked their main source of input for second language learning, 90% of learners claimed that the classroom was the primary source. This implies that any improvement in learning English or motivation to use it needs to come from the teacher. Teaching methods will have to necessarily factor in the socio-economic and financial conditions of learners and aim for a method that is eclectic. This is one important observation that flows from analysis.

Surprisingly only 10(22.72%) said they watched TV that telecast programmes in English while 6(13.6%) said they read books. This is understandable considering that Hindi and regional channels are

popular among the young and old with few showing interest in English Programs.

Learners were next asked how important it was for them to learn/know English. 43(99.98%) said it was very important for them to have working knowledge of English while one said it was important. As has been very oppositely observed by Tharu (2008):

A job market and work force with a broad social base together with the prominence of spoken English skills at work has made the relevance of the language highly visible to large segments of the population. Hence the clamour for more English from ordinary people (p.98)

Learners are aware how important English is for them from what they hear from teachers and parents, from relatives and well-wishers, from social media and the internet, about how revolutionary changes are taking place in every sphere, particularly on the job front. They intuitively know how indispensable English is for their professional growth and career. It is no surprise therefore that learners believed that learning English was important for them.

Learners were then asked to summarise their response to the prospect of using English in their everyday life ; 30(68.14%) reported they felt greatly elated on being able to learn English; the remainder-14-said they were excited to use English. It is pertinent to note that no learner claimed that they found the idea of using English anathema to them.

The next question sought to know if they were comfortable with the idea of learning English through mother tongue. It will be in order to mention in this context there was an informal chat with students regarding their opinions about allowing L1 as scaffolding. No attempts were made to influence their opinion. They were just asked if they would welcome the teacher using Telugu/Hindi to explain a lesson or poem. Some students said it would be a good idea to translate lessons and poems into mother tongue to ensure greater enthusiasm from teachers while others said it was enough if tough or challenging passages were explained. But it did emerge that students were

not at all averse to the idea of English being taught through a local language, be it Hindi or Telugu.

Many students-particularly those from the historically marginalized communities were heartily open to the idea of being taught in mother tongue as these learners from disadvantaged backgrounds had none to help them with English outside class hours. All the exposure to English they got was during the time spent in school and they needed motivating to keep them going. The one sure way to get them interested was to start the opening gambit in their language.

The next question then wanted learners to specify the exact occasion bilingualism ought to figure prominently. All the learners were unanimous that it would be greatly useful to use Telugu/Hindi when (a) introducing new vocabulary, particularly if the term(s) was/were abstract or beyond comprehension despite elaborating the meaning in simple English.

Learners added that it would also be useful to use mother tongue when crucial rules pertaining to grammar and usage were explained. They also welcomed the method when a difficult to comprehend idea could be made easier to comprehend through L1 use.

Annamalai (2008) hits the nail on the head when he says:

If the learning of English has to move from universal preference to universal achievement then it is essential to have an integration of the teaching of English with the teaching of the mother tongue and have to have innovation in methodology appropriate to learners who come from adverse backgrounds (p.112)

Teaching English to students “whose parents and grandparents were denied access to this language by socio-political factors, and who now want to equalize their opportunities in the newly opening Social and economic systems,” (Annamalai, 2008, p.112) is always a challenge and one of the innovative ways is to use mother tongue judiciously.

In informal talk learners expressed an eagerness to hear their mother tongue employed as a

means to get the meaning across to a class with a heterogeneous mixture.

When learners were asked if bilingual method would in any way help them learn the target language better, 43 learners (99.9%) replied that it would while there was only one who said it would help only sometimes. Almost all the learners maintained that bilingual method is a useful tool because they themselves code-switched in and outside classroom; teachers themselves used both English and one other language when talking to colleagues and subordinates, and that using a language that both learners and teachers operated in would be helpful to teach English.

Conclusions

Some important conclusion may be drawn from the study:

- (a) Learners actually have a preference for bilingual method though they seldom have the courage to recommend this as a teaching method to teachers.
- (b) Teachers are willing to use bilingual method if administrative bottlenecks and prejudices are removed. It came through from informal talk with teachers that there were strict instructions for English teachers to use only English and compel students to speak only in English throughout the time that English class was in progress. But the experience of one teacher of English who taught English as a foreign language, gives the lie to this assumption.

In a number of instances, L1 proved to be an asset in class, not a liability. As such, I firmly believe that monolingualism needs to be re-examined in terms of its effect in helping learners develop positive attitudes towards L2, motivating them, and providing them with the basis necessary to build solid foundations. (Jenkins, 2010, p.459).

Unless there is a change in mindset of curriculum designers and administrators

about the use of L1 in English classroom, English teachers will continue to teach English through English, Leading to some sections of English being left uncared for and ignored by the system.

As has been tightly observed by Annamali (2008):

Method and materials of teaching English to urban middle class children from homes where English is in the air may be not be universally applicable to all learners from different backgrounds.(p.112).

This clearly implies that indigenous methods need to be employed to teach English and bilingualism is an ideal method.

- (c) The monolingual fallacy is ingrained in the minds of both teachers and students who believe that more English means better English and more hours of exposure implies enhancement of fluency and accuracy in learners. This is not always the case and there are several parameters that needs factoring in before any such assumption is proved true.

In conclusion it may be safely summarized that bilingual method far from stinting language learning actually aids it. PremaKumari (2008) observes that:

The English language learner, in India has always visualized himself in the role of a receiver. He has accepted whatever he has been told despite his awareness that most of what he has received been imported. In the role of a critical learner, he examines the relevance of this knowledge to his own growth as a language user in a specific social context, and tries to find ways to assert himself (Dheram, 2008, p.20)

This paper attempted to do precisely that by trying in its own modest way to empower learners by seeking their views on learner friendly methods. And bilingualism emerged a clear winner.

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OPPRESSION OF BLACK WOMEN IN TONI MORRISON'S *THE BLUEST EYE***DR.SUFIYA NAHEED**

Degree Lecturer in English

Telangana Tribal Welfare Residential Degree College for Women,
Mahabubabad, Telangana
&**MUNUKUNTLA RAJU**

Assistant Professor of English

Balaji Institute of Technology and Science
Warangal, Telangana**ABSTRACT:**

*Racism, sexism, and classism all have had an impact on the lives of African-American women. When colored people were considered inferiors, these so-called systems of social and psychological constraints were imposed on the Africans living in that country. Women were related to a different caste by virtue of their sex, just as blacks were consigned to a lower class by virtue of their race. Similarly, black women were victimized not just on the basis of race and sex, but also as a result of class exploitation, which was the most severe kind of oppression experienced by blacks in America. The fact that black women lived and thrived in these circumstances is a tribute to the human spirit, but that is exactly the point. In the face of racism and sexism, black women managed to thrive, and their ability to do so was the glue that held black communities together both during and after slavery. As a result, patriarchal society's hierarchy breaks to some level in Toni Morrison's work. She depicts a woman's situation, emotion, and realization, all of which are examined to see if the female psychology is universal. Toni Morrison's novel *The Bluest Eye* is about women's lives, their activities, and their victimization by men. This paper provides an insight into the lives of African-American women who are the victims of stereotypes in society and within their own families.*

Key Words: Exploitation, Racial Discrimination, Gender, Inequality, and Oppression

In the African-American pantheon, Black Women Writers have made major contributions to unraveling the desire for validation and identity. Phillis Wheatley's legacy was continued by writers such as Zora Neale, Hurston, and Dorothy West, resulting in the birth of Toni Morrison, Gloria Naylor, Toni Cade Bambara, Alice Walker, Ntozaka Shange, and Audre Lorde, among others. Toni Morrison admonishes:

I write for black women. We are not addressing the men, as some white female writers do. We are not attacking each other, as both black and white men do. Black women writers look at things in an unforgiving, loving way. They are writing to responses, rename, re-own (Nellie 64).

She is a well-known modern-day African-American woman writer who has received several literary honors. She is the most well-known and first African-American novelist to win the Pulitzer Prize and the Nobel Prize for Literature. She has been read by a larger segment of the

American reading population than any other black writer in the country's history. What sets Morrison apart from other authors is her characters' positive attitude on life.

Toni Morrison is famous for her African-American heritage. She sought to piece together the complicated lives of African slaves and other men and women in America who were living in a backward and neglected state. They were not only despised by America's white men and women, but they were also treated as if they were animals. She was far more concerned with the black community's well-being and advancement. In an interview with Salman Rushdie, she once said these key words:

I am not sure what the word “Negro” means, which is why I write books. What is black child/woman/friend/ mother? What is a black person? It seems to me that there are so many that inform blackness. One of the modern qualities of being an African-American is the flux, is the fluidity, the contradictions (Rushdie 36).

The study of her works reveals her investigation of the meaning of blackness, particularly as it relates to the meaning of black in a white-dominated America. She demonstrated the distinction between a black and a white lady in today's American culture. Her works vividly depict the history, triumphs, and challenges of black existence from enslavement to the current day. Her major goal was to write from the perspective of a black woman. She criticizes African-Americans for viewing themselves through the lens of white beauty and culture. Radio, press, television, and cinema, among other contemporary modes of communication, have ingrained these emblems of beauty and culture in the minds of modern men and women. People are not born with the desire to injure others, according to Toni Morrison; they are trained to do so after they have been hurt themselves.

The *Bluest Eye*, Morrison's debut novel, analyzes the devastating repercussions of imposing white, middle-class American notions of beauty on a young African American girl's growing feminine identity in the early 1940s. The novel poignantly depicts the psychological devastation of a young black girl, Pecola Breedlove, who searches for love and acceptance in a world that denies and devalues people of her own race, and is inspired by a conversation Morrison once had with an elementary school classmate who wished for blue eyes. Pecola's mental condition deteriorates, and she yearns desperately to attain the traditional American ideals of feminine beauty—white complexion, blonde hair, and blue eyes—as portrayed by popular culture's symbols and rituals. The *Bluest Eye* juxtaposes passages from the Dick-and-Jane grammar school primer with memories and stories of Pecola's life alternately told in retrospect by one of Pecola's now-grown childhood friends and by an omniscient narrator in a fragmented narrative from multiple perspectives and with significant typographical deviations. The *Bluest Eye* was published in the middle of the Black Arts movement in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and it has gotten a lot of attention from literary critics—though not as much as Morrison's subsequent works. The *Bluest Eye* has been widely regarded as a literary watershed, inspiring a proliferation of literature written by African-American women about their identity and experience as women of color. Its sensitive portrait of African American female identity and astute critique of the internalized racism bred by American cultural definitions of beauty has been widely regarded as a literary watershed, inspiring a proliferation of literature written by African-American women about their identity and experience as women of color.

Let us now look at what the term "racism" actually entails. Racism is defined as a belief in racial distinctions that serves as a rationale for treating members of that race unfairly. The

word is frequently used in a pejorative context. It is generally linked to racial prejudice, aggression, hate, discrimination, or oppression; nevertheless, there are many different and debated meanings for the word. Racism is a "-ism," or a view about race that may be defined by a term ending in the suffix -ism. Because there is little scholarly consensus on the meaning of the term "race," and because there is also little agreement on what constitutes discrimination, the exact definition of racism is debatable. Critics say that the word is used inconsistently, with an emphasis on white biases and the definition of racism as just observing racial disparities. The sorrow of oppression and internalized racism is explored in *The Bluest Eye*.

The tale of two black families, the Macteers and the Breedloves, is told in this work. Both are poor African-American families, albeit Macteer's situation is a bit better, who have traveled in quest of work from Alabama and Georgia (South American states) via Kentucky to Lorain, Ohio, an industrial state. The story depicts the ugliness of racism through the eyes of an African adolescent girl named Pecola. She, like other African females, was subjected to the ills of racism and sexism in a white-dominated America. Pecola was a poor, unattractive, black eleven-year-old girl who wished she had blue eyes. She also believed that by doing so, she would be able to get the affection she sought and that her sufferings in her parents' tumultuous home would be alleviated. Because they had been adversely impacted by the cruel norms of the white society, she was raped by her own father and beaten by her mother. She was a victim not just as a black girl, but also as an unprotected woman. Morrison, who sympathized with Pecola, was aware of white people's neglect and exploitation of black Africans.

A reading of Toni Morrison's work *The Bluest Eye* gives the sense that the narrative intertwines the concerns of two primary topics. She delves into the tragedy of children's oppression or violation, particularly of impoverished children, as well as an issue unique to populations targeted by racism: internalized racism. This is a form of thinking that occurs when members of a targeted group, in this case African-Americans, start to accept stereotypes about themselves and feel that European-Americans are superior in terms of beauty, morality, and intelligence. Morrison concentrates on the issue of internalized racism, as though it were a problem that affects children. Internalized racism's psychological mechanism is based on a cycle of oppression.

The oppression cycle is a complicated phenomenon that impacts everyone who is affected by oppressive institutions, whether they are oppressors or victims. Because she is a child, the child is oppressed. She or he is incapable of combating or resisting injustice. She or he is trained to respond to injustice and pain with a variety of disempowered behaviors, including quiet, self-abuse, despair, and fury. When a kid grows up in an oppressive system, his or her position frequently transforms, and he or she takes on the role of oppressor. This cycle is particularly evident when it comes to the oppression of children, but it is also visible when it comes to the persecution of ethnic groups.

The oppressors of Pecola in *The Bluest Eye* have been harmed by repressive parents and/or racial ideologies. Morrison is quick to stress out that individuals are not born with the desire to harm others; rather, they are trained to do so when they are injured themselves. Mrs. Breedlove's daughter, Pauline, is an excellent illustration of this occurrence. Women in the Lorain community shun her because she wears the markers of her race and class too prominently. She dresses in rural clothes and talks with a southern drawl. As a response, Pauline adopts the oppressor's rhetoric, notably the discourse on physical attractiveness.

Pauline is unattractive in comparison, whereas her white bosses are lovely and deserving of all of her care and affection. As a result, Pauline accepts her given status on the color, attractiveness, and privilege ladder. She is unable to care for her daughter or anybody else in her family as a result of her position. They don't deserve any of her attention, according to the script. Pecola is born with this racist beauty concept. She doesn't stand a chance from the start. Her mother has focused all of her attention on her profession, and she has absorbed the idea that black is unattractive and white is attractive to the point where she perceives Pecola as an unattractive ball of black hair when she is born. Pecola seemed to have received no affection or sustenance from her and Cholly. They're so consumed with their personal conflict that they don't seem to see the harm it's doing to their daughter. The MacTeers' position is similar to that of the Breedloves. Morrison uses these two families to create a storyline and subplot similar to Shakespeare's King Lear. The Breedloves have it far worse than the MacTeers. While the parents appear to be struggling with poverty, they remain committed to their family. Mr. MacTeer considers it his unwavering responsibility to provide for his family and to assure the upbringing of his girls in the accepted morals of their day. Neither parent has the time or emotional energy to devote to their daughters' upbringing. They treat Claudia and Frieda as if they were pieces of furniture that are inconvenient to care for but must be maintained. Mrs. MacTeer is harsh with them, yet she cares for them. She punishes people indiscriminately and too quickly, failing to recognize their physical or moral integrity. She refrains from assaulting them for the sole purpose of unleashing her own pent-up rage.

When Frieda is sexually abused by Mr. Henry, her parents accept her tale and act quickly, punishing Mr. Henry and leaving Frieda to figure out what it all meant. Mrs. MacTeer unintentionally instills white supremacist beliefs in her kids when she offers them white dolls to adore and cherish as a Christmas gift, although she never explicitly states that her girls are ugly:

Adults, older girls, shops, magazines, newspapers, window sign - all the world had agreed that a blue-eyed, yellow-haired, pink-skinned doll was what every girl child treasured. 'Here,' they said, 'this is beautiful, and if you are on this day "worthy" you may have it (Morrison 20-21).

The MacTeer family appears to reflect a typical African-American household in Lorain, Ohio at the time of the novel's publication. Most African-Americans were impoverished, and they tried to make ends meet by following the respectability code. Children were treated badly on a regular basis, but the assault of their innocence was done more ideologically than physically. The Breedlove family exemplifies all of the aforementioned African-American community's flaws. Morrison avoids the simple interpretation that would just consider the Breed loves as an unpleasant anomaly by organizing her story in this way. Rather, they are the natural progression of the norm.

Toni Morrison therefore addressed the important issue of racism and sexuality among black Africans residing in America. They were greatly ignored and exploited by white men and women in that vast country against the black-skinned people. She was well aware of, and genuinely worried about, the over-poverty, oppression, and exploitation of Africans in the United States. As Friere has argued, she had a strong awareness of the interplay of race, gender, and class in this way. "Indeed, the interests of the oppressors lie in changing the consciousness of the oppressed, not the situation which oppress them... for the more the oppressed can be led to adapt to that situation, the more easily they can be dominated"(Friere47).

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