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A COMPARATIVE LEXICAL STUDY OF "THE WHITE TIGER" AND "THE RELUCTANT  
FUNDAMENTALIST"

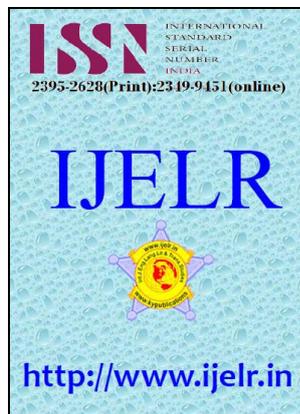
RAJENDRA KUMAR MEENA  
17, Shiva Colony, J P Phatak  
Tonk Road, Jaipur

ABSTRACT

The present article is tied to focus out which type and how the lexical items are chosen and used the present writings. It encompasses the study of words and their formation, the type of words used, and the deviation from the norms of standard variety. It deals with some of the principles which are required to take an account of how lexical innovations are achieved in creative writings. In this article the complex phenomenon of lexical innovations and their use in creative language is focused on in detail. The focus has been on when and why the speaker or writer feels the need to innovate lexical items and linguistic features. The study of lexical innovations is extremely beneficial to understand the social and cultural background of a speaker and it becomes more beneficial when speaker's/writer's culture is different from that of the reader. Also in cross-cultural communication they have to switch to other code on demand of the situation ie when the equivalent word in target language does not reflect exactly the same meaning that is conveyed in the mother tongue or for conveying a specific cultural meaning.

**Keywords:** lexical, premodifier, jargon, neologisms, mhapaxlegomena, Indianization, colloquial.

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Lexis

We use lexical study in linguistics to refer to the vocabulary of a language. It encompasses the words and their formation, the type of words used, and the deviation from the norms of standard variety. The researcher's aim is to find out the type of words – subject specific or lexical sets, context matching or deviated, simple or complex – that occur in the both writings. Both Aravind Adiga and Mohsin Hamid use a number of linguistic deviations for various purposes; to maintain readers' attention in con (text); to express cultural emotions; to capture sociolinguistic reality; to present the things on the pages; and to create something new, honest and attractive. But one thing is clear that these linguistic moves have made their descriptive and narrative lively, easy, forceful, attractive, economical and interesting. The study will focus on whether they are 'violation of lexical rules or 'idiosyncratic linguistic choices' or the rules have extended beyond the limits. The researcher will also study how often they have used lexical items that fall into different categories like standard English – British or American, substandard English, dialect and Indian English.

## 2.1 Grammar in lexis

The lexical study deals with the lexical set – nouns, adjectives, verbs, and adverbs etc. which occur in the writing. It is the lexical items that are remarkable for their semantic aspect. Unlike grammatical/functional words, the lexical items have a lot to do with semantic as well as contextual point of view. It also deals with the types of noun phrases used; whether they are functioning as only heads or have pre/post-modifiers; whether they are simple or complex having phrases within a phrase; whether they are presented straight forwardly or show some kind of striking deviation. It will also focus on what types of the verbs occur; whether they are dynamic/stative; transitive/intransitive etc. both Aravind Adiga and Mohsin Hamid have at times verbalized and deverbalized items. The frequency of attributive adjectives is more than that of the predicative ones. The premodifiers are greater in number than the post modifiers. They also use new adjectives. They have done wonders in describing things, persons and situations. Adverbs of manner are much more than other types of adverbs. Both of them have used the adverbs conspicuously because they prefer precision while describing an activity or action. All this covers a lot of grammar, but there is another thing about grammar:

*...it always stops short of telling us just who did just what to just whom. What is left to describe after Grammar has been described is called lexis ...The same thing can be both a grammatical, with grammatical features, e.g. singular noun, and a lexical item, e.g. carpenter.<sup>1</sup>*

### 2.1.1 Adjective

*Which black river am I talking of – which river of Death, whose banks are full of rich, dark, sticky mud whose grip traps everything that is planted in it, suffocating and choking and stunting it?<sup>ii</sup> (The White Tiger 15)*

Adiga, by using these adjectives, presents a conspicuous phenomenon of mud because of extreme pollution and the scene becomes darker due to the use of present participle.

Adiga uses present participle for presenting the scene live;

*When the buses came, they got on – packing the inside, hanging from the railings, climbing onto the roofs – and went to Gaya; there they went to the station and rushed into the trains - packing the inside, hanging from the railings, climbing onto the roofs – and went to Delhi, Calcutta, and Dhanbad to find work. (The White Tiger 26)*

Adiga's and Hamid's deftness to describe someone or something is surprisingly praiseworthy. What about a phrase but the whole sentence functions as an attributive adjective. Their deviation makes the reader chuckle and be proud of such a novelist:

These are **your-fortune-and-weight-for-one-rupee** machines that stand on every rail platform in the country. (The White Tiger 247)

*So I had to turn and do the amazing **one-hand-on-the-wheel-one-hand-with-the-whisky-bottle** trick all over again. (The White Tiger 216)*

*Lunch was taken in the cafeteria; over **chicken-pesto-in-sun-dried-tomato** wraps we observed the assured urgency...<sup>iii</sup> (The Reluctant Fundamentalist 36)*

When Jim and Changez were discussing in an exquisite hotel, the Makati Shangri La, Changez seemed somewhat tired, Jim reassured him *Not in a bullshit, **say-something-nice-to-raise-the-kid's-morale** way.* (The Reluctant Fundamentalist 70)

Here, **say-something-nice-to-raise-the-kid's-morale** the whole sentence acts as an adjective.

They also use verbal adjectives/participles to qualify and describe someone or something. They use both present and past participles. At times, they use participle + Noun and sometimes adjective + participle + Noun as the situation demands:

*...Going home! And in my uniform, driving the Stork's car, chatting up his son and daughter-in-law! (The White Tiger 80)*

*...a photograph; blurred, blackened, and smudged by the antique printing press... (The White Tiger 39)*

*I pulled alongside and – claiming victory at last over my cowering tongue... (The Reluctant Fundamentalist 25)*

At many places they use striking verbal participles so as to express what they intend to express.

*My cousin- sister Reena got hitched off to a boy in the next village. (The White Tiger 36)*

*I waded into the pond, got to the other side, and climbed up the hill; (The White Tiger 41)*

...himself unable to stop glancing over his shoulder at those girls... (*The Reluctant Fundamentalist* 26)

Both the writers get an adjective from the switched language ie Hindi to modify a noun in the matrix language ie English.

...a **samosa-and channa-serving** establishment... (*The Reluctant Fundamentalist* 33)

I charged into the **paan** seller... (*The White Tiger* 251)

**Maroon** colour sandals... (*The White Tiger* 22)

Adiga is such a novelist as can get an adjective from Hindi to modify an English word:

...which had the additional benefit of giving me the look of a **pucca** servant. (*The White Tiger* 129)

Both of them use a series of adjectives to describe persons, things and situations:

...the Ambassador; a stout one with a **bald, brown, dimpled** head,... (*The White Tiger* 24)

A rich man's body is like a premium cotton pillow, **white and soft and blank**.

(*The White Tiger* 26)

... Calcutta, **leaner, darker angrier**,... (*The White Tiger* 26)

Adiga as well Hamid uses both **Inherent** and **non-Inherent** adjectives. The adjective that characterizes the referent noun directly is an Inherent adjective and the adjective that does not characterize the referent noun directly is a non-Inherent adjective. As Randolph Quirk and Sidney Greenbaum state *adjectives that characterize the referent of the noun directly are termed INHERENT, those do not are termed NON-INHERENT.*<sup>iv</sup>

... the **big** men of this country... (*The White Tiger* 135)

Here in the phrase 'big men' the adjective 'big' is non-inherent as it does not characterize the referent noun 'men' directly and it does not show their length but it tells about their status and power which they have accumulated by politics.

He was a Sikh, a man with a **big** blue turban. (*The White Tiger* 55)

Here in the phrase 'big blue turban' the adjective 'big' is inherent as it characterizes the referent noun 'turban' directly and it tells its length.

Some of the examples of **Inherent** and **non-Inherent** adjectives used in *The White Tiger* and *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* are as follows:

#### Non-Inherent

That's an **old** trick I learned from the Great Socialist. (*The White Tiger* 317)

Wen! **Old** friend! Tonight we bring this glorious tale to a conclusion. (*The White Tiger* 292)

I am not a **big** believer in compassion at the workplace. (*The Reluctant Fundamentalist* 159)

#### Inherent

... the **old** man went inside the beautiful big glass building. (*The White Tiger* 180)

You know the big house that's on the Ashoka Road, where we went to... (*The White Tiger* 211)

The chief of the publishing company was an **old** man... (*The Reluctant Fundamentalist* 141)

#### 2.1.2 Nouns

At times, the formation of noun phrases is very much striking, which indicates Adiga's and Hamid's strange sense of forming strange combination which is certainly eye-catching:

**say-something-nice-to-raise-the-kid's-morale** way. (*The Reluctant Fundamentalist* 70)

In the above example, the premodification of the noun phrase is strange, striking and conspicuous. When one gets oneself tired from hard work one needs **something-nice-to-raise-the-kid's-morale**. Hamid has used the whole sentence – **say-something-nice-to-raise-the-kid's-morale** – as a premodifier of the head word 'way' so as to create the sense of courage which one needs when he/she goes tired. The reader can easily guess how much thrilled Changez would have been when:

"I like you, you know that?" he said. "Really. Not in a bullshit, **say-something-nice-to-raise-the-kid's-moral** way. (*The Reluctant Fundamentalist* 70)

Similarly, Adiga also uses a complete sentence as a premodifier of a noun phrase:

So I had to turn and do the amazing **one-hand-on-the-wheel-one-hand-with-the-whisky-bottle** trick all over again. (*The White Tiger* 216)

**O Lamb-that-was-born-from-the-loins-of-a-landlord**. (*The White Tiger* 155)

*The premodifiers of an NP may be determiners, enumerators, adjectives, nouns, prepositional phrases, genitive phrases, relative clauses adverbs.*<sup>v</sup>

But the reader can see that both the novelists have used the complete sentences as premodifiers of noun phrases and their such deviations show that they can do wonders in English language as can be done by a native user.

The reader also sees the mother tongue interference in the use of nouns. We do find that a native user of Hindi language can repeat the same noun by distorting or mixing its form as;

*I bought a tea and a **potato vada**, and sat under a banyan tree to eat. (The White Tiger 204)*

In the above example the phrase 'potato vada' is similar to a phrase in Hindi ie 'aalu vada' but here its half part is used in English and other half part is used in Hindi.

Similarly, Hamid is no less than Adiga so far as the deviations due to mother tongue interference are concerned.

*... East Village apartment, of a **samosa-and channa-serving** establishment called the Pak-Punjab Deli; (The Reluctant Fundamentalist 33)*

Both the novelists use simple and complex noun phrases. Their noun phrases are sometimes only main phrases and they are at times with subordinate phrases.

*A main phrase is one which is a direct constituent of a clause, i.e. which is not part of another phrase, while subordinate phrase are those which are part of other phrases.*<sup>vi</sup>

*...a fat man with a fat moustache, thick and curved and pointy at the tips. (The White Tiger 24)*

In the above example there is a complex noun phrase having 'man' as the head word. The prepositional phrase – with a fat moustache – has been used as a post-modifier of 'man' but the other adjective phrase – thick and curved and pointy – and prepositional phrase – at the tips – do not post modify the head word 'man' but they are functioning as the post-modifiers of the subordinate phrase. In the above combination we have three subordinate phrases two in the form of prepositional phrases and one in the form of adjective phrase between them which are parts of the noun phrase/main phrase.

*...a solidly built woman with a pistol at her hip... (The Reluctant Fundamentalist 75)*

In the above example there is a complex noun phrase having 'woman' as the head word. The prepositional phrase – with a pistol – has been used as a post-modifier of 'woman' but the other prepositional phrase – at her hip – do not post modify the head word 'woman' but it is functioning as the post-modifiers of the subordinate phrase. In the above combination we have two subordinate phrases in the form of prepositional phrases which are parts of the noun phrase/main phrase.

*...images of the mother-goddess Kali on the dashboard... (The White Tiger 132)*

*...tract from end to end – from lips to anus. (The White Tiger 141)*

In the above two examples both the prepositional phrases are post-modifiers of the head 'image' and 'tract' respectively. Both the novelists deal with the lexical item 'noun' very effectively showing a sense of deviation when the context demands. The reader sees an abundance of pre-modifiers and post-modifiers of the noun. All types of the pre-modifiers and post-modifiers which we may have in noun phrases have been very conspicuously used by both of the novelists.

### 2.1.3 Verbs

Aravind Adiga as well as Mohsin Hamid presents different categories of verbs for different types of things. For the **inanimate concrete**, the reader finds *stretch, continue, collapse, curl* etc, for the **animate concrete** he may find *shake, grin, pull, wonder, snatch, appear* and for the **inanimate abstract** he finds *blur, turn, sigh* etc. The context full of activity has been expressed by the dynamic/activity verbs. The stative verbs have been used to show inactiveness and stagnation. The transition from an unpleasant situation to a pleasant one, and vice versa is shown by a number of verbs.

*My little Laxmangarh. I saw the temple tower, the market, the glistening line of sewage, the landlords' mansions – and my own house, with that dark little cloud outside – the watter buffalo. It looked like the most beautiful sight on earth. (The White Tiger 42)*

In the above quote, there is the description of the White Tiger's own village – Laxmangarh from the old fort. The scene is so beautiful that one's attention becomes stagnated, so here Adiga uses the opening sentence without any verb. The next sentence is used with a stative verb 'see' with an extended object series which indicates the standstill attention. In the last sentence he uses a copula verb 'look' which do not require any object but either complement or adverbial. This also indicates that there is no other object in his mind than the scene.

*"I'm sorry," she said. "No I am sorry," I said. "You do not like it?" "I don't know," she said, and for the first time in my presence, her eyes filled with tears. (The Reluctant Fundamentalist 90)*

In the above quote the situation is after love making scene. When Changez was inside Erica, on seeing her discomfort he forced himself to stop. Though the love making process seemed desired by both the parties involved as Changez pulled Erica to him *embracing her gently and giving first her forehead, and then her lips, a kiss. She did not respond; she did not resist; she merely acceded as I undressed her. (The Reluctant Fundamentalist 89)* Here when both the parties feel sorry the statements are framed with linking verbs to show that after love making both of them are thoughtless. Again in the further two statements the stative verbs 'like' and 'know' are used to show lack of action.

When Balram, the driver is left in the car and Mr Ashok and the Mongoose went in the President's House. Balram assumes about the activities which may be fulfilling in the President's House. This process involves a lot of thinking on the part of Balram because he has never been there that Adiga shows by using dynamic verbs:

*Somewhere inside these domes and towers that were all around me, the big men of this country - the prime minister, the president, top ministers and bureaucrats - were discussing things, and writing them out, and stamping papers. Someone was saying, 'There, five hundred million rupees for that dam!', and someone was saying, 'Fine, attack Pakistan, then!' (The White Tiger 135-136)*

Adiga uses sentences without a finite verb to present the situation overloaded with the multiple work at a tea shop;

*Working in a tea shop. Smashing coals. Wiping tables. Bad news for me... (The White Tiger 38)*

He also uses without finite verb sentences to present a fearful or surprising situation;

*Going home! And in my uniform, driving the Stork's car, chatting up his son and daughter-in-law! (The White Tiger 80)*

To show the peaceful life of ancient India Adiga uses the sentences without a verb at all. The verbless sentences show the lack of hurly-burly of modern city life. And he compares the ancient India to a zoo.

*A clean, well-kept, orderly zoo. Everyone in his place, everyone happy. Goldsmiths here. Cowherds here. Landlords there. (The White Tiger 63)*

When Balram is away from his master Mr Ashok. Mr Ashok's face reappears in his mind's eye as it used to every day when he was in his service. It would reflect in his rearview mirror. Here Adiga uses verbless sentence to show the peace in Balram's mind;

*Picture a six-foot-tall fellow, broad-shouldered, with a landlords's powerful, punishing forearms; yet always gentle and kind to those around him, even his servants and driver. (The White Tiger 46)*

When Balram was working at a tea shop. The shop owner sells his workers' votes to the Great Socialist's party and Balram has to go to voting booth for adding his name on the voter list. When Balram went to school a man in a government uniform was sitting at the teacher's desk in the classroom, with a long book and a black pen, and he was asking anyone two questions. Since Balram was illiterate he is unaware of all this, even he does not know his date of birth. He is horrified in front of the government officer and the situation is presented by the author with verbless sentences.

*'Name.'*

*'Balram Halwai.'*

*'Age.'*

*'No age.'*

*'No date of birth?'*

*'No, sir,...' (The White Tiger 96)*

To present a situation that is lack of action or activity Adiga uses sentences with linking verbs;

*In ten minutes, I was at the headquarters of the Congress Party. Now, this is an easy place to find, because there are always two or three giant cardboard billboards with the face of Sonia Gandhi outside. (The White Tiger 134)*

To present a situation that is full of calmness and lack of action/activity Hamid is no less than Adiga so far as the use of linking verb is concerned.

*The setting was superb, the wine was delicious, the burgers were succulent, and our conversation was for the most part rather pleasant. Erica seemed happy that I was there,... (The Reluctant Fundamentalist 54)*

Both the writers frequently use a linking verb with long complement;

*...this was a beautiful, modern car, with all the necessary comforts; a speaker system, A/C, nice glossy leather seats, and a big stainless steel spittoon in the back. (The White Tiger 69)*

*I said I was from Lahore, the second largest city of Pakistan, ancient capital of the Punjab, home to nearly as many people as New York, layered like a sedimentary plain with the accreted history of invaders from the Aryans to the Mongols to the British. (The Reluctant Fundamentalist 7)*

At times both the novelists repeats the same verb in a series of clauses or sentences or even in a whole paragraph. In the following quote Hamid repeats the modal verb 'would' in its perfect form in the whole paragraph:

*During the preceding hours, Erica and I **would have** lived an entire day together. We **would have** woken in my bedroom and breakfasted with my parents; we **would have** dressed for work and caressed in the shower; we **would have** sat on our scooter and driven to campus, and I **would have** felt her hemlet bumping against mine; we **would have** parted in the faculty parking area; and I **would have** been both amused and annoyed by the stares she received from the students passing by, because I **would not have** known how much those stares owed to her beauty and how much to her foreignness; we **would have** gone out for an inexpensive but delicious dinner in the open air, bathed by the moonlight beside the Royal Mosque; we **would have** spoken about work, about whether we were ready for children; I **would have** corrected her Urdu and she my course plan; and we **would have** made love in our bed to the hum of the ceiling fan. (The Reluctant Fundamentalist 172-173)*

Adiga presents this road side picture with a thought about his father by the use of stative, dynamic and linking verbs:

*Hundreds of them, there seemed to be, on either side of the traffic, and their life was entirely unaffected by the jam. Were they even aware that there was a jam? We were like two separate cities – inside and outside the dark egg. I knew I was in the right city. But my father, if he were alive, would be sitting on that pavement, cooking some rice gruel for dinner, and getting ready to lie down and sleep under a streetlamp, and I couldn't stop thinking of that and recognizing his features in some beggar out there. So I was in some way out of the car too, even while I was driving it. (The White Tiger 138-139)*

In this powerful description, the words are simple, familiar, more concrete and least abstract, perfectly matching the natural conditions of the time and place. Both the novelists use current idiomatic English, which is evident from their extensive use of phrasal verbs, eg. *lie down, incline to, peer out, get up, get into, drip down, scratched out, point out, turned out, holding out, goes out, loomed out, drive out, scramble out* etc are only some of them.

Both of the novelists deviate from what is usual or normal. Their deviation is surprising, eye-catching but often fit to the context. When they have no other way to convey what they intend, deviation appears to help them, which makes the reader understand easily what they intend to communicate. For this purpose they can mix languages, present the pronunciation even in written form and deal with lexical, phonological and syntactic level as they want. One such lexical deviation which involves mother tongue interference is as follows:

*There, every morning, tens of thousands of young men sit in the tea shops, reading the newspaper, or lie on a **charpoy** humming a tune... (The White Tiger 54)* Adiga could have used 'lie on a bed' in place of 'lie on a charpoy'. The lexical group 'lie on a charpoy' shows the impact of Hindi language and Indian culture. One can see such scenes at a tea shop in a village.

*'It's not piJJA. It's piZZa. Say it properly.'*

'Wait – you're mispronouncing it too. There's a T in the middle. Peet.Zah.' (*The White Tiger* 154) Here Adiga paints phonologically eye-catching deviation.

Apart from this, Adiga and Hamid use the verb in such a way that the meaning is conveyed effectively. Pinky Madam, as if too angry because her driver Balram is somewhat clumsy dressed and Mongoose's tart remarks, not just shut the car door but *she left, slamming the door; I waited for ten minutes. And then, inside the car, I changed.* (*The White Tiger* 151)

The verb *slamming* expresses the speed and impact of Pinky Madam's anger. The sound produced because of the impact of her anger is somewhat terrifying to Balram. The changing of dress highlight Pinky Madam's anger, who announces 'you're supposed in neat and clean dress.' to her driver.

At times Adiga also uses a chain of certain verbs so as to indicate continuous and sequential actions:

*...or is chased, beaten, buggered, and garroted by the brother of the woman he has done in.* (*The White Tiger* 126)

*...you see – they expect their dogs to be pampered, and walked, and petted, and even washed!* (*The White Tiger* 78)

## 2.2 Neologisms

Another major linguistic device is lexical innovation, new coinages/compound words which also fall under the category of neologisms. The neologism is *any new word which is introduced into a language, by whatever process... either derived ... or by a direct process of blending.*<sup>vii</sup> Neologisms can be broadly categorized into two – those serving as adjectives and those as nouns. But mainly they are adjectives, premodifiers describing a certain noun – concrete and abstract – from various angles, resulting from the writer's desire to enable the reader to look at the things the way they are looking; Adiga and Hamid want the reader feel what they feel. Though a writer is mainly concerned with only his/her perception, both Adiga and Hamid want to share this with the readers. It is like a follow-this-route thing, and, to their credit, the readers can and do. Then this process of theirs is not idiosyncratic because the concepts they express are universal. Moreover, many writers observe these things like them, but are not able to express like them. These coinages/compounds are of many types: The reader finds solid ones like *gunnysack*, hyphenated like *half-cooked ideas*, *skin-whitener creams*, *saffron-coloured creature*, *glossy-skinned creature*, *Indian-style*, *card-board-backed poster*, *full-fat milk*, *tan-inducing sunlight*, *after-work drink*, *soon-to-be-redundant workers*, *key-chain-swirling*, *paan-chewing*, *gossip-mongering* etc. Open ones like *a pedestrian-only piazza*, *Microsoft Family Time*, *maroon colour sandals*, *Indian liquor men*, *English liquor men* etc.

There is a mixing in *key-chain-swirling*, *paan-chewing*, *gossip-mongering* and *ammonia-releasing* which are used in the sentence; *The drivers were waiting near the parking lot of the hotel, in their usual key-chain-swirling, paan-chewing, gossip-mongering, ammonia-releasing circle.* (*The White Tiger* 200-201) Which is a combination of *Noun + verb (-ing)*<sup>viii</sup>, where the noun, the recipient of the action, is denoted by the verb (ing).

Another special feature and the most conspicuous is the innovations, compound words created just for the occasion, so that a lot of things could be expressed fully, freshly and economically.

*The motivation for syntactic recategorization is often the condensation of information. Longer phrases and even whole clauses can be substituted by single complex words, which not only makes life easier for speakers and writers (also his clumsiness vs. that he was always so clumsy), but can also serve to create stylistic variation.*<sup>ix</sup> The above situation can be seen at many a place in these novels.

*But listen! Did you hear that, sir, a muffled growl, as if of a young lion held captive in a **gunnysack**.* (*The Reluctant Fundamentalist* 100)

In the above example, Hamid combines two nouns *gunny* and *sack* to create a new word. Here, the reader finds 'the condensation of information' as stated in *Word Formation in English*. This is so because Hamid uses a coinage 'gunnysack' in place of 'a chiefly coarse sack made of jute fibre'. Following the same rule, Adiga uses:

*A stiff **card-board-backed** poster for a pornographic film was tied to the back of his cycle.* (*The White Tiger* 23)

In the above example, Adiga combines three words *card*, *board*, and *backed* to create a new word. Here, the reader finds 'the condensation of information' as stated in *Word Formation in English*. This is so because Adiga uses a coinage 'card-board-backed' in place of 'a poster supported by a card-board at its back.'

Adiga presents noun + noun type compounds; *rickshaw-puller* (*The White Tiger* 48), adjective + noun type compounds; *late-night* (*The White Tiger* 32), noun + adjective type compounds; *diamond-shaped* (*The White Tiger* 7), *skin-whitener* (*The White Tiger* 12), verb + noun type compounds; *take-home* (*The White Tiger* 5), adjective + adjective ( $v_3$ ) type compounds; *broad-shouldered* (*The White Tiger* 46), adjective +  $V_1$  + ing type compounds; *grim-looking* (*The White Tiger* 67), *awe-inspiring* (*The White Tiger* 95), noun + noun + adjective ( $v_3$ ) type compounds; *water-lily-covered* (*The White Tiger* 86) which are quite frequent throughout the novel.

Adiga as well as Hamid also creates noun + noun combinations, where the former noun functions as a premodifier. Such examples as *body builders*, *Bangalore stories*, *Mother Ganga*, *military helicopter*, *a Taliban command post*, *computer programs*, *a cotton shirt* show the above combination but Hamid's such combination is striking and suggests deviation as is clear when he uses *Microsoft Family Time* (*The Reluctant Fundamentalist* 36). He could easily have used 'during our working as family at Microsoft' in place of *Microsoft Family Time*. Apart from this, there are adjective combinations like *half-cooked* (*The White Tiger* 11), *saffron-coloured* (*The White Tiger* 19), *full-fat* (*The Reluctant Fundamentalist* 15), *soon-to-be-redundant* (*The Reluctant Fundamentalist* 99). They are different from the hyphenated ones like *easy-to-read novel*, *ready-to-eat* etc. The test, as Valerie Adams says, depends on *whether the second element can stand alone as pre-modifier*.<sup>x</sup> If yes, then the case is that of an adjective compound. And in this case the second element as *coloured* can stand alone as a pre-modifier, for instance, a coloured glass. Apart from the usually productive combinations like noun + noun, adjective + noun, verb (ing) + noun etc., Adiga and Hamid also use the less productive ones like the particle + verb as *an after-work drink* (*The Reluctant Fundamentalist* 37) and verb (ing) + particle. They also uses such lexemes as can't be found in the dictionary. Hamid uses *jeepney* in place of jeep, which is clear in the following example:

...the driver of a jeepney returning my gaze. (*The Reluctant Fundamentalist* 66)

Adiga uses the word *clankety-clank*, to show the sound from the *fortune-and-weight-for-one-rupee machines*. *The machine comes to life; levers start to move inside, things go **clankety-clank**, and the lights flash like crazy.* (*The White Tiger* 247)

Even one cannot find the word *clankety* in a dictionary but Adiga uses it to show 'a series of sounds typically made by pieces of metal meeting together.'

### 2.3 Nonce formation

Another lexical characteristic that the reader sees in both of the novels is nonce formation. *Oxford Concise Dictionary of Linguistics* defines the nonce-word as:

*A word coined on a specific occasion. Thus there is no established word **bananaphobia**; but it might be invented as a nonce-word, e.g. for the condition of some person who refuses to have bananas in the house.*<sup>xi</sup>

Adiga uses the term **Heeyaa! Heeyaa!** For frightening the lizard:

'Don't kill it, Daddy – please!'

*But he wouldn't listen. He kicked the cupboard, and the lizard darted out, and he chased it again, smashing everything in his way, and yelling **Heeyaa! Heeyaa!*** (*The White Tiger* 30)

The writer can produce new words as the language has the quality of productivity but... *productivity is defined as the possibility of creating a new word, it should in principle be possible to estimate or quantify the probability of the occurrence of newly created words of a given morphological category. This is the essential insight behind Bolinger's definition of productivity as 'the statistical readiness with which an element enters into new combinations'...*<sup>xii</sup> Here, in the above example when Adiga uses **Heeyaa! Heeyaa!** for frightening the lizard the reader easily estimates what he wants to say, though this words has no entry in the dictionary. It is not the dictionary but the reader's mental lexicon which allows him/her to understand what the writer wants to convey with the help of newly-produced word.

The reader, at times, comes across such words as have the lowest occurrence in the text. The writer can create a new word, combination of words or can use the already known word only once to meet the specific situation or to convey his/her specific intention. Such words fall into the category of **hapaxlogomena**. The reader can find:

...the items with the lowest possible frequency, the so called hapaxlegomena. Hapaxlegomena (or hapaxes for short) are words that occur only once in a corpus.<sup>xiii</sup> The minute observation enables the researcher to find such hapaxes. Once Changez was walking to his rental car in the parking lot of the cable company. When he was approached by a man he did not know, the man pressing his face alarmingly close to Changez's face, made a series of unintelligible noises:

*"akhala-malakhala," perhaps or "khalapal-khalapala" (The Reluctant Fundamentalist 117)*

In the above example Hamid uses *akhala-malakhala* and *khalapal-khalapala* to indicate the tribal remark for Changez who is Pakistani Muslim for the meaning 'fucking Arab' and this combination – *akhala-malakhala* and *khalapal-khalapala* – happens only once in the novel so as to meet the condition of hapaxlegomena.

#### 2.4 Taboo words

Taboo words are those words that people avoid because they are extremely offensive or embarrassing. *Oxford Concise Dictionary of Linguistics* defines a taboo word as:

*A word known to speakers but avoided in some, most, or all forms or contexts, for reasons of religion, decorum, politeness etc.*<sup>xiv</sup>

But both of the novelists, as the reader sees, do not hesitate to use such words. Adiga as well Hamid does use such words but only in some contexts. At times these words sound highly obscene and offensive at that.

Both the writers frequently use *fuck, fucker, fucking* etc. very much.

*What a **fucking** joke. (The White Tiger 7)*

*I guess, Your Excellency, that I too should start off by kissing some god's **arse**. (The White Tiger 8)*

When the school inspector comes for a surprise inspection on finding various holes in the wall, red discolouration, no duster in the class, no chairs, no uniform for the boys he rebukes the school teacher;

*How much money have you stolen from the school funds, you **sister-fucker**? (The White Tiger 34)*

When Balram goes to the crowd of unemployed people for a job, a Sikh man who was a truck driver finding Balram weak pushes him off commenting;

*'Too thin! **Fuck off!**' (The White Tiger 55)*

When Balram was loitering at a brothel street, a paan-seller who was the sidekick of the pimp, suggests him to chew a paan or drink hot milk with a comment that *it will help if you're having trouble getting it up!* On this Balram kicked the **midget** in his face. (The White Tiger 251)

When Balram and his cousin Dharam were sleeping in their room a thick-bodied grey gecko had come down from the wall and was on Balram's bed. Balram cried, *'I'm not joking, you **moron** – get it out of my bed!'* (The White Tiger 266)

Once Changez was walking to his rental car in the parking lot of the cable company. When he was approached by a man he did not know, the man pressing his face alarmingly close to Changez's face, made a series of unintelligible noises. Changez prepared to defend himself or to strike just then another man came he too glared at him, but he took his friend by arm and led away saying;

*"**fucking Arab**," (The Reluctant Fundamentalist 117)*

#### 2.6 Slang

Slang is used especially by the people who belong to a particular group, such as young people or criminals. The slang tends towards colloquial style. By using slang, Adiga and Hamid show an indication of and an inclination towards using the language the way it is used in daily life.

When Pinky Madam and Ashok were travelling into the countryside, towards Laxmangarh with their driver Balram, Pinky Madan calls Ashok as *Ashoky* lovingly:

*'Why are we going to this place in the middle of nowhere, **Ashoky**?' (The White Tiger 80)*

The Mangoose calls Mukesh as *Mukeshan* affectionately:

*'Are you crazy? Don't open that here in the car. It is for **Mukeshan**.'* (The White Tiger 239)

Balram describes Mr Ashok as *first-gear man* because he likes to start new things but do not hold for long with them. And in the end of the novel he also describes himself the ditto. Being a driver Balram uses the word *first-gear* for innovative. Because a driver picks up his car in first-gear and this gear can't stand for long as the car gathers its speed.

Mr Ashok was a classic **first-gear** man. (*The White Tiger* 142)

Balram's dick is not in his control. No sooner does he see any girl or woman then it makes movement. It becomes troublesome for him and he calls it *beak* in his circle. Many times he uses this slang in the novel for abuse:

*If they didn't have their money, he liked to dip his **beak** into their **backsides**...* (*The White Tiger* 25)

Mongoose comments on Ramanathan as a stupid person by using the slangs as *fixer*, *sleazy*, *cretin* which are very common for the rich men to describe the poor ones. A very common slang, *rape* is used for spoiling:

*'Ramanathan is a **sleazy**, oily **cretin**.... We need to go to the newspapers and tell them we're being **raped** by these politicians!'* (*The White Tiger* 121)

Hamid also uses the slang *rape* for spoiling:

*Solid people, don't get me wrong. I like Pakistanis. But the elite has **raped** that place well and good, right?* (*The Reluctant Fundamentalist* 55)

## 2.7 Formal-informal vocabulary

Both the novelists use both formal and informal vocabulary as the context demands, unlike many other Indian writers whose vocabulary leans heavily towards formality and bookishness. Informal vocabulary is used where there is intimacy and lightness. A close sense of intimacy between both the brothers Kishan and Balram, reflects in the following statement;

*I knew the moment I let go he would **bugger** me badly – I hadn't sent any money home for the past two months.* (*The White Tiger* 83)

Balram is quite informal when he talks about other drivers;

*There was the smell of ammonia in the air; one of the drivers was **pissing** not far from us.* (*The White Tiger* 153)

Balram prefers informality when he thinks about Pinky Madam:

*When she sat in the back, I could see half her **boobs** hanging out of her clothes each time I had to look in the rearview mirror.* (*The White Tiger* 143)

Similarly, Balram is very informal in dealing with persons, in describing things and situations and he also uses informal words for himself:

*The three **mutts** seemed so comfortable....Here I had to stop, because five feet ahead of me a row of men squatted on the ground in a nearly perfect straight line. They were **defecating**.* (*The White Tiger* 259)

When Adiga describes the talk between the *pink lips* and Balram about the likings and disliking of the film actresses he chooses the informality;

*He named three famous Mumbai actresses his master had 'hammered.' 'And yet he looks like a **goody-goody**.* (*The White Tiger* 201)

Mukesh Sir is informal when he instructs his driver Balram:

*'You can go now. And be ready at 8 a.m. No **hanky-panky** just because you're in the city, understand?'* (*The White Tiger* 129)

Mr. Ashok and *the minister's sidekick* are very informal when they talk about a call girl.

*I glanced at the minister's **sidekick** ... 'She's there right now. Let's go see her. She's a **stunner**. I tell you. Just like that American actress. Do you have thirty thousand on you?'* (*The White Tiger* 215-17)

Hamid is no less than Adiga so far as the use of informal vocabulary is concerned. He uses informal word *chap* instead of man or boy. *I must admit, he is a rather intimidating **chap**.* (*The Reluctant Fundamentalist* 6)

Again he chooses informal *guy* for himself in the statement; *I was the first **guy** from my family to go to college.* (*The Reluctant Fundamentalist* 9)

Hamid likes informality in telling how he would manage his alcohol;

*I told her that alcohol was illegal for Muslims to buy and so I had a Christian bootlegger who delivered **booze** to my house in a Suzuki pickup.* (*The Reluctant Fundamentalist* 27)

Hamid is quite informal to describe the dialogues between Changez and Erica when they talk. The situation as well as the matter of their conversation is quite informal so Hamid chooses informal vocabulary according to the demand of the situation.

*She took a sip of her water and managed to wink at me. Then she said, "Freaky, huh?" (The Reluctant Fundamentalist 103) Again Erica likes informality during her talking with Changez; "Sometimes," she said, smiling. "Any fantasies of kinky sex,"... (The Reluctant Fundamentalist 135)*

The following talk is informal when Jim summoned Changez to talk over the matter of Changez's long beard; *"Listen, Kid," he said, "some people around here think you're looking kind of shabby. The beard and all. Quite frankly, I don't give a shit. (The Reluctant Fundamentalist 137)*

## 2.8 Types of language varieties

Adiga and Hamid have used both standard varieties – British and American – as is clear by their selection of words.

Indian variety can also be seen to some extent, perhaps to acknowledge its existence and also to hint at a world English. British English is obvious and can be seen throughout the novels. But it is juxtaposed with American English, for example:

*There was so much garbage by the roadside that it lay there looking perfectly natural. (The White Tiger 284)* where garbage means, in American English, waste material, such as paper, empty containers, and food thrown away. In British English it is rubbish.

Balam uses **hollering** (*The White Tiger* 251) an American informal for the meaning of to shout loudly.

When Balam drove towards headquarters of the Congress Party the three giant cardboard **billboards** (*The White Tiger* 134) made the place easy to find which is different from British hoarding.

In the following sentence Adiga uses the British English word film and its American counterpart movie:

*Now, I no longer watch Hindi films – on principle – but back in the days when I used to, just before the movie got started,... (The White Tiger 8)*

Hamid chooses many words with American spellings as *color, favor, fervor, favored, favorite, tire, endeavored, enamored, behavior, honor, neighbor* etc. Changez uses the word **enamored** (*The Reluctant Fundamentalist* 93) to convey the state in love with Erica which is different from British enamoured. He says *I was hurt by this behavior. (The Reluctant Fundamentalist 102)* Here he chooses the American spelling. Again he likes the American spelling of honour in the statement *you will grant me that honor? (The Reluctant Fundamentalist 109)* When the Pakistani terrorists attacked the Indian parliament the whole Pakistan was confronting the possibility that soon their country could be at war. Changez himself admits the weakness that every Pakistani had in their mind: *But I worried. I felt powerless; I was angry at our weakness, at our vulnerability to intimidation of this sort from our – admittedly much larger – neighbor to the east. (The Reluctant Fundamentalist 128)* The word neighbor is different from the British neighbour.

When Erica remembers her past datings with Chris she describes how they sneaked out to avoid being seen by parents. Hamid chooses the American past form of the verb sneak ie *snuck* that is different from British sneaked which also emphasizes that Erica is an American.

*We each got a pair as a present and we snuck out with them without telling anyone. (The Reluctant Fundamentalist 136)*

Changez described the scene after the destruction of the World Trade Center. The entire scene was full of American flags: *...stickers of flags adorned windshields and windows.... (The Reluctant Fundamentalist 79)* Here the windshield is different from the British windscreen.

When Changez told his own felt experiences in Princeton he uses *in my sophomore year. (The Reluctant Fundamentalist 4)*. The word sophomore is used for the meaning of 'a student who is in his second year of the study at a college' which is different from British second year.

Changez uses *entryway* instead of British gate or door when he goes to Erica's:

*I had forgotten how stunning she was, and in that moment, pressed as we were into close proximity by the confines of the entryway, I was forced to lower my eyes. (The Reluctant Fundamentalist 50)*

Indian English is a recognised variety of English, according to Crystal, *India has the largest population of English speaking people in the world.*<sup>xv</sup> Kachru describes Indian English like this: *One legacy which the Indians slowly accepted, and then in their typical Indian way acculturated, is the English language. The outcome of this long process of Indianization of the English language is what is now termed 'Indian English.'*<sup>xvi</sup> It is a difficult task to

define English in India. Balasubramanian says that *a definition of Indian English is as elusive as a definition of any other variety of English such as British or American English. There are simply too many variables to neatly define the English used in India as a single variety.*<sup>xvii</sup> English used in India is very hard to define as one variety, since there are too many variables to consider. Balasubramanian has, however, found some features that can be seen as typical for Indian English. The English that is spoken in India has features that are typical for this variety of English; these features are not found in either British or American English.

The reader finds the frequent use of **Indian variety** of English in both the novels. According to Balasubramanian *there are many features that researchers have found in Indian English which differ from Standard English. The features that are found in Indian English include the following: Indian words, stative verbs in progressive, use of perfect aspect verb phrases instead of simple aspect verb phrases, errors with preposition use, errors with article use, absence of subject-auxiliary inversion in question formation, use of "isn't it?" as an invariant tag, relative clause constructions and the use of transitive verbs intransitively.*<sup>xviii</sup>

Reader sees various utterances which are used in Indian variety of English:

*My aunts and **cousin-sisters** gathered around her. (The White Tiger 28)*

**cousin-sisters** is an example of Indian English. It is a compound of two British English words 'cousin' and 'sister' which does not exist in the British English. The word cousin and the word sister are both a part of the British English vocabulary.

At sometimes their deviation cannot be said to be acceptable to standard variety of English. In English language some verbs are stative which are not used in progressive aspect but Adiga and Hamid do not hesitate to use the stative verbs in progressive aspect:

*So I am guessing ... (The White Tiger 23)*

*He was seeing his Family... (The White Tiger 88)*

*I am even thinking of advertising in the newspaper... (The White Tiger 54)*

*...he's having an open auction for that post. (The White Tiger 49)*

*...my intrusion on a conversation Erica was having with Chris. (The Reluctant Fundamentalist 112)*

In both the novels the reader finds frequent use of Hindi words:

*We went into the house where the taxi drivers lived. An old man in a brown uniform, which was like an ancient army outfit, was smoking a **hookah** that was warmed up by a bowl of live coals. (The White Tiger 56)*

*"Wow," she said, reaching out to graze the embroidery on my **kurta** with the tip of her finger, "you look great." (The Reluctant Fundamentalist 50)*

Balram uses *spy mirror* in place of 'rearview mirror'. Adiga uses the phrase *spy mirror* because Balram was not simply looking towards his master's activities but actually he was spying.

*I saw in the spy mirror that Mr Ashok was pressing the buttons on his mobile phone as I drove. (The White Tiger 211-212)*

Some other examples of Indian variety of English:

*The lights have gone. (The Reluctant Fundamentalist 60)*

*...Mukesh Sir, the Stork's other son ... (The White Tiger 62)*

*Ah, our tea has arrived! (The Reluctant Fundamentalist 11)*

*It is excellent, no? (The Reluctant Fundamentalist 15)*

*"it's beautiful," she said, meeting my eyes. (The Reluctant Fundamentalist 28)*

Both the writers at times use the **old English** variety:

*'About getting your master something he'd like? **Hashish**, or girls, or golf balls? (The White Tiger 201)*

*Two homeless **urchins** were watching me... (The White Tiger 243)*

*... I would not have, in my **woeing** of Erica,... (The Reluctant Fundamentalist 18)*

*...faces glowed on the blank heads of **mannequins**... (The Reluctant Fundamentalist 56)*

At times both the novelists use the written variety of English language:

*The black ball moved; **grimacing** to protect his eyes against the drizzle, he looked up at me. (The White Tiger 284)*

*Vijay **chortled**. He raised his voice. (The White Tiger 270)*

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*I stood still, taking in the vista, but not far long... (The Reluctant Fundamentalist 34)*

*I did not know – but that they were scrambling to don the costumes of another era was apparent. (The Reluctant Fundamentalist 115)*

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<sup>i</sup>Michael, Cumming and Robert Simmons. *The Language of Literature*. (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1983) 171.

<sup>ii</sup>Adiga, Aravind. *The White Tiger*. (Noida: Harper Collins Publishers, 2008) 15.

<sup>iii</sup>Hamid, Mohsin. *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*. (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2007) 36.

<sup>iv</sup>Quirk, Randolph and Sidney Greenbaum, *A University Grammar of English* (Delhi: Pearson Education, 2005) 133.

<sup>v</sup>Leech, Geoffrey, Margaret Deuchar and Robert Hoogenraad, *English Grammar for Today* (London: Macmillan Press LTD, 1982) 65.

<sup>vi</sup>Hoogenraad 58.

<sup>vii</sup>P.H. Matthews, *Oxford Concise Dictionary of Linguistics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005) 241.

<sup>viii</sup>V. Adams, *An Introduction to Modern English Word-formation* (London: Longman, 1973) 67.

<sup>ix</sup>Ingo Plag, *Word-formation in English* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002) 73-74.

<sup>x</sup>Adams 91.

<sup>xi</sup>Matthews 245.

<sup>xii</sup>Plag 64.

<sup>xiii</sup>Plag 66.

<sup>xiv</sup>Matthews 371.

<sup>xv</sup>D. Crystal, 'Mother-tongue India,' *ABC Australia*, 2005:01.

<sup>xvi</sup>B. B. Kachru, 'Models of English for The Third World: White Man's Linguistic Burden or Language Pragmatics?' *TESOL Quarterly* Vol. 10, No. 2. Jun, 1976: 225.

<sup>xvii</sup>C. Balasubramanian, *Register Variation in Indian English* (Amsterdam: John Benjamin's Pub Co., 2009) 251.

<sup>xviii</sup>Balasubramanian 50.

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