

LITERARY WORKS: A PANACEA, VERBAL INTERMEDIARY AND MEDIASCAPES FOR THE PERSON WITH SELECTIVE MUTISM. A STUDY ON NIAL WILLIAM'S HISTORY OF THE RAIN.

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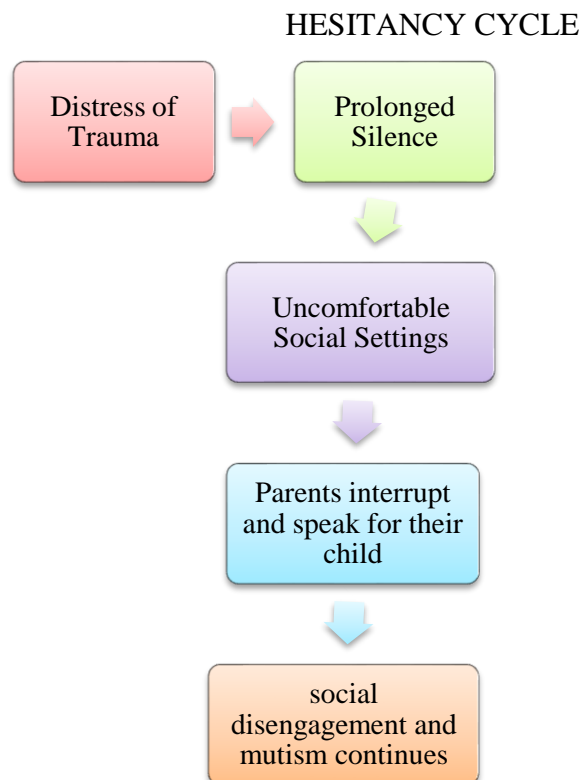
Abstract

As everyone knows that literature plays a significant role to bind human nature and culture across the world. It is also a liaison between authors and readers. Every author has their own style of writing to show the beauty of literature. From classical age to modern age, books inspire readers by authors' grandeur language, sublime story, and distinct narrative techniques. Books induce and ignite readers to write about their personal thought, feelings, and emotions. As like people with Selective Mutism use books as a communication tool to transfer their thoughts and ideas so for the books are the verbal intermediary to deliver their message to the world. Neal Williams's, An Irish writer, novel *History of the Rain* elucidates the trauma of a girl who suffers by Selective Mutism because of unidentified blood disease. Moreover, the author explores what are the effects that literature has on individuals and how books become a Mediascape and Identity Marker to express her sufferings and to embed her family history through transitional communication.

Key Words: Selective Mutism, Communication Tool, Verbal Intermediary, Mediascape, Identity Marker, Transitional Communication.

The term Selective Mutism (SM) specifically refers to the persons who are able to speak normally but do not have the courage to speak in public. It is an anxiety disorder. Persons with Selective Mutism generally have social phobia or social anxiety. It devitalizes them and gives more pain for their inability. Consequently, it causes severe anxiety and makes them be mute in social settings. Thus they are unable to communicate effectively in a public gathering. But they speak and communicate where they feel comfortable, secure and relaxed. Their trepidation and hesitation are the major barriers to speak explicitly in social scenarios. As a result, they fail miserably in socializing with people and they become socially isolated.

One of the major reasons for Selective Mutism is traumatic incidents that have happened in their life. The impact of trauma will always be terrible to a person. It affects a person emotionally, psychologically and spiritually. Therefore when people experience extreme distress and pain they want to be mute and afraid to talk what they have thought deliberately by the past traumatic events.



The hesitancy cycle exhibits the behavior of the persons with SM. The distress of trauma makes them be prolonged silence in uncomfortable social environments. So parents or any other persons interrupt and speak for them. Consequently, persons with SM disengaged with social activities and Mutism continues forever. These people have both negative and positive

Hardy, R.L.Stevenson, Balzac and Virginia Woolf. Among them, she feels Dickens' *Great Expectation* is the greatest novel and R.L.Stevenson is her favorite.

Gradually the works of these writers become a panacea for her inability. They uplift her, distract her sufferings and resolve her strife for communication with society. The works of 19th-century writers' are not only to bring the historical events but emit an aberrant human behavior, generalizes new mode of thoughts and ideas, and feelings in the reader. The universal reason for its persistence is, it has contributed highly appreciated storylines, narrative techniques and majestic characters to the literary world. The books create a way of communication for Ruth to overcome Selective Mutism which is called transitional communication.

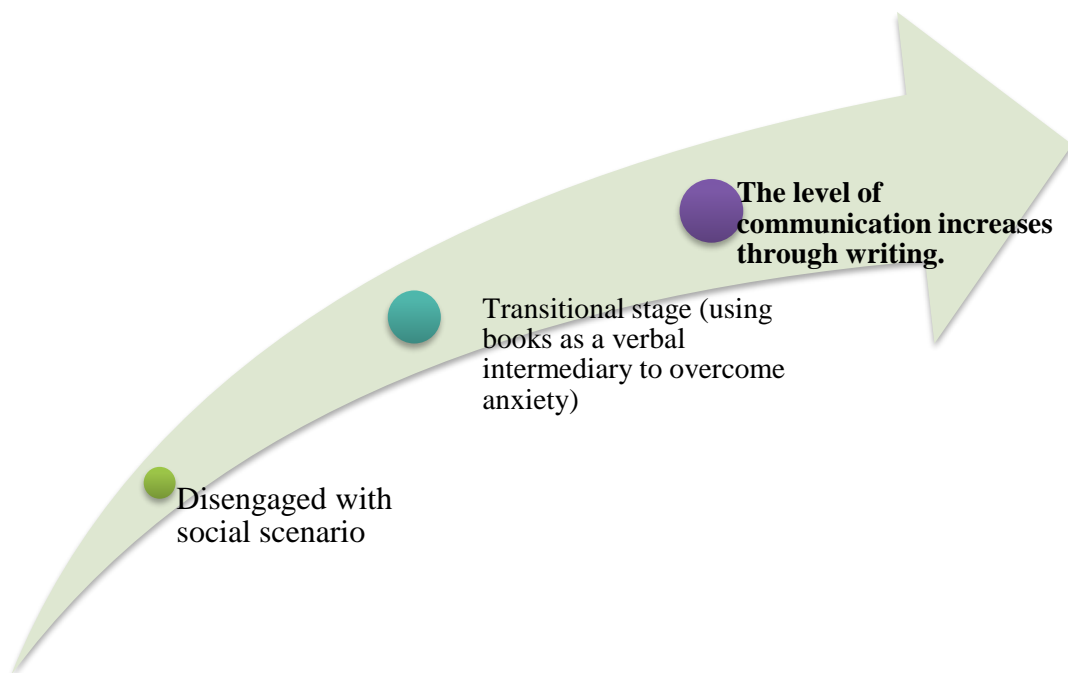
At the beginning of the novel Ruth dislikes writing but always want to be a reader. Writing is an art which has a universal tendency to make things special. So an author or a writer gives more pain to present something better in their work in a considered way. Authors can impress the reader by delivering his/her social status, illustrate the myth and fantasy of their country and expose their culture and tradition. Thus books play an integral part to convey any information to the reader. Books are not the words of a language. They are symbols, communication tool and the development of a culture.

As Ruth finds out that people of everywhere make and respond to her writings and become evidence for her family identity. And she also thinks that after writing a story in a novel format which deals with her family history will survive in the world perpetually. Her inspiration upon literary works encourages her to write a story with the techniques of the writers like Dickens, Hardy, and Woolf etc as they have used in their work. After finishing 3958 books she gets strategies about writing stories. Through her writing, she wants to trace her father's and grandfather's life and believes that will be an emblem of her family's identity, culture, profession, feelings, and failure of their family. She embodies the major events of her family history, describes the scenario of her city and failure of their philosophy. She starts her writing with "This is my father's story. I am writing to find him" (5). Consequently, she finds out a way to explore her depression.

In her writing, she expresses her tribulation about her twin brother Aeney's death. It becomes a bolt from the blue to her. After that incident, her life drunk with self-blame, hopelessness, anxiety, and fear. She isolates her in a room and spends her life alone. As days pass on, she suffers by some unidentified blood disease which makes her be bed bound. After that, she totally disconnects herself from society. She loses the courage to face people even her family. So the trauma of her brother's death and her disease lead her to Selective Mutism. Leonard

and Dow state that "Selective Mutism often focused on the family and experiences with trauma, such as a hostile home environment, physical or sexual abuse, or tragic events such as the death of a loved one. Trauma may still be believed to be the cause for some cases of Selective Mutism" (3). So this is her first trauma which makes her be mute.

Transitional Stage



According to her books are the only nonliving things which can transfer the real and live emotions of a person. Through reading one can experience the happiness, trauma, bitterness,

ego and villainous features of the characters. When readers live along with the story they cry, laugh, express anger and feel pity for the characters of the story. Though they do not see them they create a moving image of the story within them. Therefore they can understand the significance of the story and appreciate the author for his grandeur writing. At the end of the story, she finishes her writing and ready to publish it. She is happy and enthusiastic to explore her untold truth about her family history to the world. Moreover, she feels that as a part of the family she gives fame to them even though she is bedbound. Books are the fantasy world of imagined characters. Through words, a writer can give life to the characters. So they are the mediascapes which generate creative thoughts of writing which are beyond imagination and they also play as a verbal intermediary to transfer her information to the world.

The term Mediascapes is coined by Arjun Appathurai (a socio-cultural anthropologist with specializations in globalization, public culture, and urban studies) in his work "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy". Mediascapes is one of the five dimensions of global cultural flow. The five scapes are Ethnoscapes, Finanscapes, Technoscapes, Mediascapes, and Ideoscapes. The word scapes refer to the irregular shapes of these scapes." (298).

What he theorizes is the complexity of how the form of media impact viewers and create an imagined world and desire for other lives or things. Mediascapes emphasize the complexity of identity by using and naming states, nations, imagined nations, groups, and individuals.

He also stated:

‘Mediascapes’ is a series of elements (such as characters, plots and textual forms) out of which scripts can be formed as imagined lives, their own as well as those of others living in other places. (299)

Mediascapes is the medium (such as books, news, magazines) of a person which trigger him to create an imagined world. He/she will be the designer of their own imagined world. One can create his self-image through mediascapes. It is an active, co-creative sense of a writer, developmental editor, and website editor. (297).

In *History of the Rain*, the book is used as a mediator to send her information to the reader and book is also used as Mediascapes to create an imagined world after reading the 3958 books of the 19th century. Ruth is engaging with the reader by great affection and mutual respect. Through her story, she expresses her true love on his dead twin brother Aeney. In books, the messages and meanings were uttered by words and the reader has understood the utterance beyond the literal meaning of the words and grasped the particular sense in which

the writer intended them to be understood. Signals transmit messages from a source to the destination.

Likewise, Ruth sees the book as a signal. It transmits information from those books in the attic to the Ruth and Ruth's writing to the reader. The words, phrase, and sentences have used as a code to convey meanings. She expresses her feelings and emotions in her story. Ruth has encoded her ideas, feelings, and emotions in words, phrases and sentences and the reader has to decode these signals (Words, phrase, and sentences) in order realize the underlying ideas, feelings, and emotions. A book can give that sense to the reader while reading her story. The reader can believe, feel and think what Ruth has told in her story. She wants that everyone should know about her family history and tradition. After bedbound the level of her confidence has decreased.

But through reading and writing, Ruth creates characters, settings, plotline and a textual form. She gives an everlasting life and happiness to her family and tradition of the Ireland people. Books play a crucial role in the meaning-making process in her life. They have done the multifarious job as verbal intermediary, mediascapes, testimony and identity marker. Books are the link between the present and previous generations. Eventually, they help Ruth to open up her mind to the world.

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