

Communication is the key to Connection: Post-Structuralist analysis of Anton Chekov's *The Man Who Lived in a Shell*

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Abstract- Communication enables people to express themselves and the hidden expressions are strong enough to communicate through the layers of meanings within the text. Similarly, these textual layers or hidden meanings gives insight of the text and enables the reader to understand the complexities from the narrator's point of view. Post-structuralism basically clears those ideas and layers of meanings with the cultural, social, autobiographical etc. elements so that the reader can grasp the whole. As Derrida proposed to the poststructuralism theory that "Meaning lies within the text". Hence, the Researcher has tried to analyse A Man Who Lived in A Shell by Anton Chekov. The strong elements of restrictiveness in the communication are strappingly present in the story which are brought to the surface by the application of this theory. The Researcher has reached the point that Belikov was a victim of perplexing thoughts and was unable to communicate himself to the fullest to the people he cared for.

Index Terms- Post-Structuralism, Communication, Perplexing Thoughts, Confinement, Restraints

I. INTRODUCTION

Anton Chekhov increased an education, preparation and filling in as a specialist as he additionally was known as writer. Chekhov's character and his work evidently keep on perplexing experts, masses and followers. Stories about his life relentlessly allude to the indirectness of Chekhov. Chekhov's appearance of own persona was uncertain. Class and governmental issues were significant in his works with the nearness of workers, of landowners and shippers, literati and specialists, is fundamental to Chekhov's playwriting. The disturbance achieved by shifts in the class framework because of the development of new belief systems, he was purposely self-denying, and he expounded little on himself. It was significant in any thought of Chekhov to have a comprehension of the recorded setting wherein he was composing. Even over a hundred years after they were composed, Anton Chekhov's plays fill theatres all through the world, his accounts are ceaselessly republished and reinterpreted and basic material on Chekhov is created in prosperity (Whyman, 2011). There is no writer like Chekov ever since and he has presented many guidelines on how to write and play with languages. His

writings give the deeper significances and layers of meaning for the reader to extract out. Chekhov's strategies on turning into a decent author had been given the trust that these rules will be helpful to learners and to skilled proficient playwrights at the same time. Chekhov knew the weight of isolation that accompanies composing, the urgent need to inscribe, and the demoralizing sting of an indistinctive gathering. Chekhov's exercises to adhere to plain yet exact language, to dismiss words gauged down with uncontrolled feeling, to convey genuine declaration about our lives and to recall that experts can reduce the feeling of isolation experienced by the individuals who write. He followed no plot, no ending rule solely as comprehended of material taken from Chekhov. Furthermore, Chekhov said almost nothing about composing. Although, as his story unfurls, one detects Chekhov's finely tuned mind filtering, gauging, and estimating noise against first-hand information, he kept quiet about issues addressing his specialty. Chekhov during the span of his expedition, introduced the scenes and accounts he describes as guidance based on both hypothetical and common sense (Lenc'ek, 2004). So, the textual layers in his works are apprehensive and these structures are to be analyzed in order to get the proper idea about the contextual meaning of his works.

As correspondence empowers individuals to communicate and the shrouded articulations are sufficiently able to impart through the layers of implications inside the content, Chekov's work contain many such communicative layers. Communication is always the key to understand a text and as seen Chekov had always tried to infuse it in his works. History is always a part of the complexities to endure in life and without connection to the past nothing can be comprehended to its very core. Similarly, communication to the present and retaining one's self into the present and present life modules, one must step out of the past. The desire of sticking to the past can be as deadly as the desire of not following advices from the past. In this modern world, it is necessary to follow both past and present hand in hand otherwise one always ends up in a shell where no one can reach. Confinement is like a disease of soul, once people start sticking to only personal opinions, it becomes difficult for them to survive in a society of new ideals and it makes necessary to communicate. As seen in Chekov as well, his works are not only related to the past but the present too and his work contain these communicative layers and depict that if people retain to their shell, their communication keeps on becoming difficult. His works suggested that mental captives is

the only left option if communication in a society is not comprehended. A person feels alienated in a society where he/she can't communicate and then the isolation becomes his home where no one can reach.

This Mental captivity due to lack of communication alludes to diverse phobias and fears in people. After a time, these people would not let anyone enter in their inner circle and if ever they tried that to happen, they think too much about issues related to themselves, they end up being afraid. Such people can overthink each scenario and take out something bad from it. The fears make them redundant to everything and the only important thing in their live remains the ability to hide themselves. They cannot stand being in the company of people as they cannot afford to trust anyone. All of this generates from the lack of communication which can built up this kind of hysteria in people. If something happens in their life, which is humiliating or causing disgrace to themselves, they do not think about it twice and they end up in their own hole in more deteriorated state. This wretchedness is self-destroying and unyielding as that issue becomes their centre. They grow themselves to such introverts which are alienated from society, not by the society but by themselves. After this lack of communication, even society is unable to understand them which makes this worse and make such people feel more alienated. They always end up in the strangeness to communication because they think sooner or later something bad will come out of it. To ponder this gap between communications between societies, Chekov's works present great detail in the layers of its content so to acknowledge and accept all kinds of people in a society than to alienate them more. In this way, Chekov was a realist to show how important it is for people to communicate in any stance. In addition, the published

II. LITERATURE REVIEW:

Many of Chekov's works have been analysed by different perspective than this one, related to the psychology, language, art etc. but one way or another it is all about the communication and the connection between his works. His works and his life have always been dealt with diverse angles as Chekhov miserable cynicism was invested not as it were an amazing spasm standpoint which was most certainly not weakened. Chekov's appreciative dissatisfaction will be style for life, indeed by essentially happy to learn that yet in addition with his optimism. Whatever Chekov said was incredibly trivial, up to present disposition his impulse was heedless (Lavrín, 1951). Chekhov's restriction, his industrious 'objectivity' has long dazed his biographers, indeed however the external realities of his life are well built up. As an author, without clamouring for recognition, Chekhov knew the tranquil fulfilment of a life of unremarkable, devoted work. Researchers have composed a mindful and revitalising investigation on his life and works, by drawing the play from different edges. Chekhov's way of life consisted of traditions, basic gathering, the making of the content, scene by scene investigation, intertextuality and the outcome (McVay, 1996). Many writers have published their works on Chekov's style and intertextuality. Katherine Mansfield works are inspired by the life and history of many Russian writers and Chekov was one of the dominant influencers in her work. Katherine Mansfield was just, imitatively, an English Chekhov, a

thought which, the main researcher of Mansfield, has made a decent attempt to dissipate. Katherine Mansfield was affected by Chekhov, for regarding experts to expect that the announcement is valid. This has been one motivation behind why the value of her work has always been concerned (Zohrab, 1988). The intertextuality in Chekhov related many times to death and exile as well. Chekhov has been related to Psychiatry very often as not just his play's characters talk so regularly in stopping tones, on occasion tending to apparently nobody by any stretch of the imagination, but the play in general was overwhelmed with distorted subplots and established wants (Gatrrall, 2003). Chekhov's account was structured in respects to what exactly was occurring to emphasize our feeling to the characters. Chekhov portrays as awful satisfaction and enthusiasm that life they wish to share (Purves, 2009). With his intertextuality, his realism is always discussed about. Chekhov's amazing quality of the nineteenth-century pragmatist custom, arranging Chekhov on the pragmatist side of the halfway point among realism and modernism. Chekhov decimates nineteenth-century scholarly shows without symbolist metaphysic. Chekhov generally showed up as an incomparable realist in addition to tasteful moderates who dismissed Modernist advancements. Chekhov's characters see the world to contend that a given Chekhovian character falls flat to accomplish an authentic freedom. Chekhov examines that his characters neglect to increase a valid and opportune knowledge into the condition of the world and their individual difficulty specifically requires an expand vision of life to gauge the character's dream against it (Shcherbenok, 2010). Chekhov's intertextuality does not retain only to psychology and realism but also takes its surfaces into voices as well. Many language philosophers such as Mikhail Bakhtin has also seen in order to analyse Chekhov's inter-language voices. This philosophy of language has been applied on Chekhov from different lens as to reveal that speaker possesses a certain position from which the individual tends to the audience. Divergent implications depending on the situation from which the characters can be analysed are observed in this domain (Outokumpu, 2000). From linguistic domain, details about the consequences of lexicographical and etymological investigation, relevant, and applied subjective survey of interpretation systems and methods of Chekhov's fiction has been analysed. Investigation of writings utilizing an assortment of techniques were expressed the viability of interpretation was controlled by the usefulness of disentangling. The appropriateness and inventive capability of Chekhov gives translation of the creator's thoughts in the objective language in his works (Nadezhda N. Volskaya, 2018). Chekhov's works pleased to have accordingly featured. The associations made were invigorating regardless of whether they may not add up to a genuine system. His essential concern was with what is random and apparently unimportant (Gibian, 1995). Practically the entirety of the significant characters in Chekhov's plays were questionable in their understanding represents no little assignment for leaders and entertainers. Due to this interpretive equivocalness, Chekhov was regularly asked to explain his situation on some of his characters. Chekhov restricted himself mostly to apparently irrelevant comments whenever got some information about a work (Holloosi). On the other hand, that name to any shrewd spectator of Chekhov follows his turns, internal, away and grin. Chekhov remained putting aches into a delicate, private to everybody into

his characters. He had a sense of directing his characters, therefore, he gained a new genuine account of fundamental significance. Anton Chekhov's life, furthermore, does more than satisfy spectators of plays (Kauffmann, 1998). The striking amount of Chekhov in English were deciphered by the scholarly network regarding either sheer measurements or unadulterated opinion. Considerably and more significantly, there shows up to be no connection between the ever progressive, and scattered, improvements in present day British dramatization. English Chekhov, as a body of reused plays, created by similar writers, thinking back in sentimentality. The examinations exhibit the manners by which the transmigration of Chekhov's language structure, punctuation and discourse structure from Russian to English draws out the basic nostalgic theme in his dramatization and lifts it to the degree of general human yearning (Klimenko, 2001). Furthermore, Chekhov's 'The Man Who Lived in a Shell' has been widely from many lenses. Chekhov's command over the structure is handy use of leitmotifs was plentiful. Furthermore, the amazing incongruity snug development that were joined into what is right around a model short tent in a delegate story like 'The Man Who Live in a Shell'. Second, Chekhov followed the rule of sky is the limit from running through significant, there is much of Chekhov's development work (Conrad, 1966). In like manner, the logical modes abused by abstract experts to clarify, decode and legitimize human deeds and activities, in scholarly works explicitly and in genuine world for the most part. Some researches restore change man's conduct and keeping character of Belikov at focus, the short story "A MAN WHO LIVED IN THE SHELL", by Anton Chekhov, was also dissected through Freudian psychoanalytic hypothesis (Hafiz Javed UR Rehman, 2015).

III. PROBLEM STATEMENT:

In examining the character of Belikov in Chekhov's works through the lens of language and intertextuality, this research applies post-structuralist theory. While Chekhov's works are renowned for their depth and psychological insight, the structural aspects, particularly intertextuality, remain underexplored in existing scholarship. By employing post-structuralist perspectives, this study aims to uncover nuanced layers of meaning and connections within Chekhov's selected text, shedding new light on the character of Belikov and his role within the broader literary context.

IV. METHODOLOGY:

For the methodology section, researcher has utilized the post-structuralist perspective as laid out by Jacques Derrida. The words structuralism and post-structuralism both indicate to a dogmatic, scholarly and tasteful allowance of philosophy of language that formed in the subsequent half of the 20th century era in a way corresponding to convinced developments in systematic way of thinking. Post-structuralist school of thought is recognised for the

V. DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

To start with the analysis of the story, the restrictiveness in communication is also a reality of life and the certainties which depict that coming out and discussing things will make everything

endeavours towards rudimentary assessment of regulating notions in old style theory, and it utilizes the Semantic turn i.e., the reconsideration of language in speculations of Information, phenomenology. As the term post-structuralism proposes, its delegates have been shaped particularly through basic conversation with structuralism. Key figures incorporate Foucault, Žižek, and Derrida, who is the most celebrated advocate of post-structuralist thought. Although, Heidegger worked in phenomenology and not in structuralism, his idea is the fundamental reference point for Derrida, whose hypothesis of deconstruction was motivated by what Heidegger calls the "annihilation" of reasoning's convention. Derrida accepted up Heidegger's requirement of a philosophical desolation of conventional classifications and presented the defence that this demolition is now grinding away in any philosophical content. This theory is the establishment of his hypothesis of deconstruction, which he sees as a hermeneutical technique that attempts to find in philosophical writings. Furthermore, particularly in their edges, Derrida encourages that internal theoretical and logical inconsistencies perpetually must be stifled by writings as their creators work to set up different truth claims. According to Derrida, Deconstruction is the specialty of perusing by which one finds the breaks and flaws in one's thinking and self-comprehension (Finkelde, 2013). Derrida battles that if distinction makes information conceivable, it additionally renders it incomprehensible on its own terms. Derrida's most intriguing development on Saussure comprises of figuring another idea, which he calls *différance*. He contends that way of thinking has generally put together ideas of truth with respect to proximity of the things or of the plan to the conscience. However, when one looks at it in juxtaposition, one finds that it's anything but a straightforward character. Occurrence must be both in time and in space. In both a fleeting and a spatial sense, at that point, occurrence emerges out of distinction. Derrida consolidates spatial and temporal contrast into one procedure distinction spelled as *différance*. It is a combination of both 'Differ' and 'Defer' where differ means to look at the meaning in contrast i.e. the binary opposition and defer means to 'to delay' i.e. to postpone the meaning as in keep looking at the meaning from various aspects. Derrida contends that language has two significant qualities i.e. its play of signifiers constantly concedes, or delays, which means, and the meaning it appears to have is the effect of the distinctions by which we recognize one signifier from another (Tyson, 2006). Researcher has taken post-structuralist strand of Derrida and has implied it on the short story 'A Man who Lived in a Shell' written by Anton Chekhov to find out that how Communication enables people to express themselves and the hidden expressions are strong enough to communicate through the layers of meanings within the text. These textual layers or hidden meanings gives insight of the text and enables the reader to understand the complexities from the narrator's point of view. This lens enabled researcher to see as Derrida proposed that "Meaning lies within text".

better, then it is not the case. Most of the times, people were unable to communicate what they feel and understand about the society. They restrict themselves in a shell for the sake of society or get

into a shell of their feelings because of society. Everyone is in a shell one way or another, but if someone is accepting or enduring it in a society, that person is paradoxically shunted off to send into another shell. Chekov has presented these layers of communicative realities with this story. The title of the story, 'A Man who lived in the Shell' represents that the story is about a person, who lived in a case, but the underlying structure and the presentation of story represents that how everyone is in the shell. The story starts off when two persons, Burkin and Ivan sitting and talking at the nighttime and discussing some of the shells that people live in. The noticeable thing here is that, they are discussing these kinds of heartfelt things at 'Night' when everything else is asleep as that they feared discussing such things in the day and bear the slang comments of society onto them. They are not coming out of the night they are trying to live in or the dark reality they must face every day. Evan had a 'strange surname' and usually was called by his first name. To live in the society full of shells, he didn't care that if his original identity is at stake if the society is accepting it. This is also a revelation of one of those shells in which people live in and cannot communicate. While Ivan and Burkin are busy in the discussion of others, they are not discussing their feelings. They are sitting and discussing futile life of others when they have 'come out to get some fresh air'. Even in such solitude and darkness where one finds himself peaceful, they are having to come out to get some breathe as they are longing for peace for so long and they feel suffocated in the day full of socially restricted people. 'They did not sleep' also adds up to the above-mentioned point. Ivan was a 'long, lean fellow', 'sitting outside' and in the 'darkness' also corresponds to the main theme of living inside a shell. The alienation in the layers and structures of story are also seen as Burkin says that "There are a lot of individuals on the planet, singled out by manner, who attempt to withdraw into their shell like a recluse crab or a snail". These people are alienated by the society as Burkin himself is treating such people as the 'other'. The use of the word 'Atavism' for such people also show that if a person casts off the rules and follow the truth and live in a shell, he/she will not be ever accepted as a person but as an alien. The people who 'live in its den' have the diverse characteristics than those of the societal people who are also unable to cope up with the internal suffocation.

Burkin tries to explain those people characteristics such as by talking about Mavra or Belikov as they are not 'uncommon' and that is the critical reality because every other person is one of these people or it will be no wrong to say that everyone is inside a shell but some people deliberately show it as Belikov did and still was not acceptable. Belikov was a 'Greek master' who always wore 'galoshes', 'warm waded coat' and 'even in the finest of weather'. He wore collars as such to hide his face in order to prevent himself of society full of Ivan and Burkin, who are judgmental and snooty for the people like Belikov and not letting the topic of Belikov go even after his death. Burkin was talking about Belikov in a manner to mock him as 'his umbrella had a case' 'his pencil' and even his 'sharpener' was inside a case. These kinds of vices always emerge in society after the lack of communication and connection with adherence to the unacceptable nature of the society.

As Derrida discussed in post-structuralism that 'différance' creates meaning and these connotations can be inside the structures of language used by the narrator, Burkin's way of narration is also representing the mocking attitude of society and culture. This is the very society which created fear in Belikov as well and this is the very society which is creating fear in everyone else including Belikov and Ivan. What people are unable to realise is that interpersonal communication about one's emotions can only shed off this societal pressure.

Moving on, to particularly discuss about the character of Belikov, the fright-ness in him is the infusion by society and can be seen in the story as he always struggled to hide himself because 'He wore dim displays and wool vests, stuffed up his ears with cotton-fleece'. He often asked the cab driver to hide himself as well. Ironically, if seen the character of Belikov is the most rule abide person of that community but still the rules made him die. He was always so afraid that 'somewhat horrible thing might come out of it' that he did not try to do anything that can reach 'up to higher authorities'. The paradox is that the rule abiding personalities end up in a den while the unlawful people can discuss about anything and everything about those rule abiders without being able to call out. Similarly, the details presented in the story about Belikov like 'the man like Belikov showed a steady and impossible motivation to envelop himself by a covering, to make himself, as it were, a case which would segregate him and secure him from outside impacts.' He wanted to put himself in a case because of the societal pressure which he was unable to endure. This unlawful and rule breaking reality of society always got on his nerves and his was afraid of the scandal as 'Reality aggravated him, scared him, kept him in nonstop fomentation, and, to legitimize his meekness, his repugnance for the genuine, he generally applauded the past and what had never existed; and even the traditional dialects which he educated were as a general rule for him galoshes and umbrellas in which he shielded himself from reality'. As discussed earlier that such people connect and attach themselves to the past in order to avoid the communication to the people of present. Similarly, Belikov was one of those people. He was attached to the classical languages and old traditions. He was the follower of the rules accepted and adhered by his ancestors because he was not a part of that society as he loved the 'Beautiful Greek language'.

People like Belikov are also the judgemental because of their own rules and sticking to the past and as they fear society, the society is also scared of them. The society must follow whatever they say because of course the authorities not only run the people like Belikov but also the people like Ivan and Burkin as well. And Burkin and other teachers followed him when he wanted a 'fourth' and 'second' grader out of the school, all teachers gave them low marks so that Belikov couldn't go to higher authorities. Similarly, every one of his colleagues was afraid of him because of this. He scared all of them by restricting that 'something bad might come out of it'. And because of this, People were not able to celebrate the private life as 'Our women didn't get up private theatricals on Saturdays for dread he ought to know about it, and the ministry challenged not eat meat or play a game of cards in his essence'.

As the law abider as he was, ironically, he also followed the rule of making connections with his fellows. He went to his co-worker's house in order to communicate and connect with the society and get back home without saying anything and spending half an hour in their homes. He called it socializing with people whereas he couldn't communicate his own self to himself as well. Even his house was in restriction, he never appointed any female cook or housekeeper because he was afraid of a scandal and even his bed had blinds to protect his. He was often afraid that the aged housekeeper he had might kill him. The society may have been afraid of him, but he was also afraid by the society and feared it because of the scandalous situations. This led him in the shell, and he was afraid to even love anyone or talk to anyone because of this redundancy to communication with his communal life.

The modern dilemma of lack of communication was on surface when a girl named Varinka came to his school as a colleague. She was a cheerful girl of thirty and Belikov seemed to have enjoyed her company. By looking at this all the ladies and gents of community got a new operation to work on as when Belikov went to the school part as a duty and his attitude towards Varinka as 'It would be something to be thankful for to make a match of it, the dean's significant other said to me delicately' as all of them have suddenly recalled that Belikov was not married. The people of society were also in search of something productive to do in their life as all the society suddenly everyone got a new entertainment. Society was uncomprehensive of the situation that anything bad out of it might affect the people like 'Belikov' but it was only Belikov's supposition and not of society.

The aftereffects of this supposition were quite dangerous for only Belikov. Belikov was afraid that the little thing he had with Varinka will end up in jeopardy as he has trusted someone this much. His over-thinkable attitude and this lack of communication with its connection to the lingering past ended him up both emotionally and physically. Furthermore, the society was bored of the daily routine and they wanted something to communicate to each other about i.e., a new scandal or new subject. As analysed by applying the deconstruction of the sentence 'A wide range of things were done in the regions through exhaustion, a wide range of pointless and unreasonable things! Furthermore, that is on the grounds that what is important isn't done in any way'. The unreasonable communication sparked out of it and its flames let the house of Belikov burn. Everyone made suggestions about his marriage which afraid him even more because 'marriage was a serious step'. He was afraid that someone will enter his territory and he had been isolated his entire life by the community and now all of this is causing irritation. His intuition was not wrong as Belikov found out that someone has made a 'caricature' of him and Varinka, he put himself into a deeper shell and pointed out that this will end up in something bad because it was named as 'Arthropod in love'.

Not only Belikov but Varinka and her brother were also living in shells as they continuously fought on baseless things in order to communicate. Varinka's brother called Belikov 'a spider' because of his rules and personality and everyone was afraid to tell him that the spider is going to marry his sister. Viranka's brother was

one of the rebellions of society who wanted to do what they loved without the fear of communicating about it to anyone, not even his sister. This kind of endurance was not accepted by Belikov and caused him his death. The gap in the communication between Varinka's brother and Belikov lead to Belikov's death. When Belikov saw Viranka and his brother 'riding the bicycle', he was aggravated and he went to their home to warn them that 'if authorities would know, it will put an end to their career' because for him 'women cannot ride bicycles as it was abhorrent'. Varinka's brother pushed him and he fell of the stairs with crippled clothes. The narration of Belikov's life ended in the essence of 'Lack of communication' as Viranka laughed because she thought he slipped whereas Belikov considered it his disgrace to be a laughingstock in front of 'women'. Belikov died of this disgrace and lack of communicative behaviour of society but the story did not end here. Everyone happy that a man who always wanted to live in a shell is finally in a shell, but soon they realized that they all are living I the shells in themselves as Ivan said 'Indeed, that is exactly how it is, and isn't our living around, airless and swarmed, our composing pointless papers, our playing cards, isn't that every one of a kind of case for us? What's more, our spending our entire lives among paltry, particular men and senseless, inactive ladies, our talking and our tuning into a wide range of babble, isn't that a case for us, as well?' This was the whole theme of the story which was underlying in the structure of its meaning that we all are living in a shell where we all are unable to communicate as "What number of a greater amount of them there will be!"

VI. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Chekhov skillfully delves into the underlying structures of his narratives to illuminate a modern truth about the perils of miscommunication. It becomes evident that effective communication is essential for fostering connections and emotional bonds, as individuals must actively seek meaning within their lives rather than conforming to societal norms. By shedding societal constraints, one can fully embrace life's richness. Decisions should prioritize both legal adherence and human compassion rather than succumbing to fear, as characters like Belikov, Burkin, and Ivan exemplify aspects of our collective humanity.

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