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Research

Auto-fiction and Merging of fiction & non-fiction in novels of Chetan Bhagat

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Abstract:

The life of the present youth (Gen Z) is so busy, and they hardly manage to spare quality time for their family, so it is obvious that for persons having interest in reading, it is very difficult to save time for their hobbies. Therefore, they pick some easy interactive literature that they can carry with them physically or get a softcopy that they can read out during a little leisure. From the writer's perspective, present day writers like Chetan Bhagat, having so much to do in their personal lives (family and career) choose easy vocabulary and smooth writing style. They present simple and easy-to-understand themes and plots. By this, they manage their worldly affairs as well as time for writing smoothly. Moreover, present-day youth have to spare time for social media.

Thus, today people prefer short writings to epics or novels with thousands of pages. Also, the youngsters brought up in Indian Culture, want Hindustani English, mixed with Indian dialects, slangs etc. Bhagat has used that Hindustani English in his literary pieces. Also, Bhagat has broken the myth that writers must have knowledge of typical writing skills, complex terminology, a lot of social experiences and that matured age to write an autobiography; he has brought the new writing styles so that novices can begin to write. With the style of writing Auto Fiction, a young writer can share his individual life experience. The content of fictionalized autobiography in his writings will motivate the beginners to find content from their own life and blend it with some imaginative elements and start writing.

Simultaneously, he provides lessons to his readers which he had been experiencing during his challenging phase through the style of Fiction, the written message being more effective than the verbal communication.

Keywords: *Chetan Bhagat, Auto-fiction, Hybrid Literature, Auto-biography, Gen Z*

Backdrop & Introduction: As we know, after 1945 the modern era of English Literature has begun. Due to the emerging middle-class readership, advancement of Science & Technology, Innovations due to AI and globalization since 1990, new themes and subjects have emerged. The people of contemporary world are more interested in reading current burning issues, problems & challenges of their day to day lives, struggling to establish themselves in new ever-changing world scenario etc. These new themes require new writing style in literature as new wine cannot be preserved in old bottle. Therefore, authors have started writing in common language & simple style so that readers can connect themselves with their plots. Auto fiction and merging of fiction with non-fiction are two of such new styles. A pioneer of such new trend is the popular writer Chetan Bhagat who has mastery on using this style.

Auto Fiction is made up of two terms - Auto means self and Fiction means story; thus, its literary meaning can be referred as "Fiction of Self or Fictionalized Self". These writings are the invention of the author and depend on his creativity. In Auto Fiction an author blends his personal experience with some elements of fiction. Chetan Bhagat is that novelist who is writing in this new genre. His Auto fiction style can be traced in "One Indian Girl", "What Young India Wants" & "Five Point Some One".

The present age is age of creativity & innovation. Hybridity is its result. Of late, the writers are making hybrid literature by blending various genres such as Romance with Drama, Fiction with Non-fiction, essays with memoirs etc. Chetan Bhagat has mastery in mixing fiction with nonfiction. Therefore, we have his hybrid novels such as "Revolution 2020", "11 Rules of My Life" etc. in which he mixes the facts and fiction to create Fiction or Creative Non-fiction (CNF).

About Chetan Bhagat: Chetan Bhagat is an Indian Novelist, Screen Writer, You-Tuber, Columnist, Motivational Speaker, Entertainer, Blogger, Filmographer and Many more. His passion for writing can be

understood from the fact that he did quit his job and shifted to Mumbai permanently for taking up wholeheartedly his writing career. During school life he often told stories and made fun by cracking & writing jokes in magazines. Today he is a famous author and writes in multiple genres such as romance, suspense, thrillers, non-fiction, real fiction etc. His debut novel was “Five Point Someone”. which portrays the story of 03 engineering students, how they struggle and find themselves as underperformers. This was bestseller novel and adopted in movie named as “3 Idiots” which was also a blockbuster. Then he has written various books such as “One night @ call center”, “400 Days”, “Three Mistakes of My Life”, “11 Rules of my life”, “Revolution 2020”, “What Young India Wants”, “2 States”, “One Indian girl” etc. These all often resolve around the theme of present social issues that must be resolved to bring the change in society.

Literature Reviewed: Reviewed multiple relevant literary works such as *Chetan Bhagatification of Indian English Literature* (A. V. Rajya Lakshmi), *A study of Love and Friendship in select novels of Chetan Bhagat* (Dr. Male Venkat Reddy et. al), *The place of Chetan Bhagat in Modern English*

Literature (Dhruv Purabia) etc. are mainly focused on the themes chosen by Chetan Bhagat to inspire the youth, themes of college life & love triangle. Some have elaborated the simple language and writing style of the writer. In the previous research articles the various aspects of writings of Chetan Bhagat are analyzed and elaborated to a great extent. They maintained the personality of Chetan Bhagat as a Youth Icon, Inspirational & Motivational Speaker, and Modern English Writer etc. The qualities are mainly concerned with characterization, themes, diction, plots of his writings but some other significant qualities of Chetan Bhagat’s writings - Merging with fiction with Non-fiction and the skill of writing Auto fiction are not clearly elaborated and we found them in a very limited area which create gap in research.

Objectives of Research: This paper focuses on two major points-

A. Study of Auto fiction in select writings of Chetan Bhagat

B. Study of merging of fiction with non-fiction in Chetan Bhagat’s select novels (The study will specifically focus on Five Point Someone, What Young India Wants, 11 Rules of My Life, One Indian Girl & Revolution 2020). It will throw light on

these new innovative writing trends in English literature.

Methodology & Sources of data collection:

Research approach will be Qualitative in nature which will involve discourse analysis, audience research & textual analysis. They will explore in-depth understanding through non-numerical data like interviews and observations.

Primary Sources considered for the study-

All Novels written by writer
 Various articles and columns
 The videos available on YouTube channel
 The Blogs written by Chetan Bhagat

Secondary Sources considered for the study-

The movies based on Novels
 The literature reviewed
 The online & offline reviews given by reader

Analysis & Interpretation: Chetan Bhagat's novels contain significant autobiographical elements, drawing heavily from his personal life and first-hand experiences, primarily at the Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT) and his corporate career. Specific quotes within the books highlight the critical, reflective perspective that suggests the author's voice through his characters:

"Continuous mugging, testing and assignments. Where is the time to try out new ideas? ... Where is the room for original thought? Where is the time for creativity? It is not fair". (Five Point someone)

"By living on our own terms. By being rats, not mice, work together and beat the system. I will not give up my friends for this system. In fact, my friendships will beat the system". (Five Point someone)

"She lifted her head, her face turned up to me trustingly. ... Our faces were only a breath apart ... I felt compelled to move my face forward. My lips met hers." (Revolution 2020)

"Sometimes your heart can lead you to a dead end." (Revolution 2020)

These examples share features of autobiographical writing such as **First-person perspective**, **Intimate emotional commentary** about love, ambition, and moral ambiguity & **Social critique grounded in real-world observation** (education system, corruption) etc.

In his fiction, Bhagat often embeds real social issues into fictional plots — giving them a “real-world feel.” Some of the examples are as follows-

“Exactly. There’s nothing wrong with him. But he doesn’t have like, any wow or thrill factor. You are choosing a husband. Not taking an amusement park ride for thrills.”
(One Indian Girl)

“The pleasure of the moment is the poison of the future.”(11 Rules of my life)

“When we choose a mobile network, do we check caste? Then why do we vote for somebody simply because he belongs to the same caste as us?”(What Young India Wants)

“Many private college owners have personally admitted to me that they had to pay bribes at every stage ... corruption in the private education sector is such a norm that nobody in the know even raises an eyebrow anymore.” (What Young India Wants)

Thus, it can be interpreted that proposed research will identify some new creative features of writing English novels in the present modern era. It will motivate the youngsters like me who want to write and express their feelings through writing but due the lack of knowledge of typical writing styles, are afraid to pick their pen. Auto-fiction and Merging of fiction with non-fiction styles are comparatively easy and therefore beginners can start writing using

these simple styles. This style of writing is flexible, simple and easy to be comprehended by readers of all kind. This will enhance readership as well as writings of English Literature which ultimately will make the English literature prosperous.

Conclusion:We can assume that Chetan Bhagat wants to bring a change in the society. So, he always tries to use innovative ideas to motivate youngsters. As per him, Youngsters have the ability to move the direction of society in the positive way to change the status of India from a developing nation to a developed nation. Writing Auto-fiction and Faction are innovative styles which make his writings interesting and lure the modern youth. They proved successful as his novels were bestsellers and the movies based on them were blockbusters.

Simultaneously, these styles have made Chetan Bhagat the most read novelist of modern middle-class youth. Just like a friend he shares his thoughts on various social media platforms to inspire the youth so that they can chase their dreams. He injects zeal, zing & zest into them so that they do something for society by taking action instead of waiting for good luck. As he delves into the real-world contemporary issues and shares his personal views in the

conversational tone and through various fictional portions, he can motivate the readers to take action.

His brother Ketan Bhagat has stated that his brother, the best-selling author Chetan Bhagat, was an inspiration for him to start writing. In an interview, Ketan mentioned Chetan's success as one of the factors that nudged him to explore his own creative potential. He noted that he realized writing was a practical creative outlet for a working professional, and his brother's path showed him that it was possible to succeed in the field.

His writings also motivate the new writers to experiment with writing styles and bring innovative ideas of writing which can increase readership & writers of English Literature. In this way his contribution to English Literature & research as well as to society is commendable. As per the time magazine - "Many writers are successful at expressing what's in their hearts or articulating a particular point of view. Chetan Bhagat's books do both and more.

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