

Intersections:
Applied Linguistics as a Meeting Place

Edited by

Elke Stracke

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Edited by Elke Stracke

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CHAPTER FIVE

WHO IS 'WE'?: ANNIVERSARY NARRATIVE AS COLLECTIVE MEMORY

FARZANA GOUNDER

Keywords: media linguistics, master narrative, identity, discourse and power, Fiji Hindi, Indian indenture

Abstract

Studies have addressed the dialogic relationship between anniversary journalism and the (re)construction of collective memory. What is missing from the discussion is a fine-grained linguistic analysis of how anniversary journalism succeeds in providing insight into the past while simultaneously maintaining relevance for the present. Through the analysis of a Fiji-Indian journalist's narrativized reconstruction of Indian indenture, which frames a commemorative radio documentary, the study asserts that journalistic anniversary narrative is a discourse of power which, through the construction of structural and thematic coherence and audience relevance, redefines collective memory and national identity. The study implements Gee's (1991) poetic framework to narrative parsing and finds that the media's presentation of anniversary news can be an agent of persuasion in promoting nationalistic identity through its emphasis on the spatial frame of the narrative, the agency of protagonists in nation building, and the links made between the positive actions of the protagonists in the past and the audience in the present.

Introduction

Applied Linguistics has a range of definitions, as reflected in this book. This chapter defines applied linguistics as a field of study that draws on the intersection of linguistics with other research fields to seek an understanding of how discourses shape who we are. To this end, the study presents the intersection of linguistics with media studies, history, and

narrative analysis to address issues around language, identity, and power within a culturally constituted space.

This study is in line with research that views journalism as a *social narrative* (Bennett 2009; Carey 1988, 1989; Jacobs 1996; LaPoe & Reynolds 2013; Lule 1995; Wahl-Johgensen 2013), which journalists use to position themselves as authoritative social interpreters (Zelizer 1990, 1993) by creating an authoritative discourse around events (Edy 2001, 2006; Harro-Loit & Kõresaar 2010; Kitch 2000, 2002, 2003; Mander 1987; Twomey 2004). In this study, I take this discussion further by analyzing how journalists' narrativization of historical events in anniversary narrative reconstructs "who we are" as an internal community construct.

The study focuses on a Fiji-Indian radio announcer's reconstruction of Indian indenture, which provides the introductory framing of a radio documentary that commemorates both the introduction of Indian indenture to Fiji and the Fiji-Indian community's beginnings. The study analyzes the construction of a historical narrative in terms of its spatial and temporal organization and the attribution of agency to protagonists. The study then explores the construction of social relevance, and, by extension, national identity, through the narrative's drawn parallels between the actions of the protagonists and those of the audience in the betterment of Fiji.

Anniversary journalism and collective memory

The analysis is rooted in the theoretical notion that media is an institution of power. Its representations are not simply reflections of the society in which they are produced; rather, they are the conceptual roadmaps that construct society's very existence. Media's discourse, in other words, gives socially relevant meaning to places, events and people at different moments in time, making concrete both what we remember and also how we remember (Hall 1997, p. 19).

Anniversary journalism

Anniversary journalism is a particular genre of news that takes place around anniversaries for commemorative purposes (Edy 2001, 2006; Kitch 2000, 2002, 2003; Zelizer 1990, 1993). Anniversary journalism draws on a community's historical antecedents deemed worthy of veneration at the time. It focuses on events at a particular time in the past and, through the temporal links between salient thematic events, forms a social narrative.

Because the narrative makes use of "facts" in the form of dates, times, places and people, the narrative takes on the appearance of a historical

overview of the event being commemorated, and the journalist adopts the role of a public historian. Yet anniversary journalism not only provides an insight into the events of the past; it draws on cultural knowledge in recreating the events being commemorated. This lets the audience form personal links to the past (Johnson 2008, p. 174), so making the events being commemorated worth remembering. These regularly repeated links to the past form a group's collective memory and are central to the construction of the group's identity (Harro-Loit & Kõresaar 2010, p. 325).

Anniversary narrative, collective memory

Maurice Halbwachs (1950) is credited with first discussing "collective memory." He defines it in terms of a shared social consciousness of remembering. According to Halbwachs, collective memory occurs at the group level. The individuals within a group are actively involved in the process of remembering and the private memories of individuals "have meaning only in relation to a group to which they belong" (Halbwachs 1950, p. 54). Further, a group's use of commemoration is important as, without the regular reinforcement from commemoration, individual memories fade over time. A group's commemorative practices imbue certain events, times, places and people with social symbolism, while also deliberately practicing social amnesia regarding other events, times, places and people. It is through such commemorations that the group constructs selective remembrance, which forms the collective memory handed down intergenerationally. Given the differing belief systems of groups, what is commemorated and generationally transmitted as collective memory differs across groups. Further, as the reconstruction of the past is always done in the present, both *what* and *how* events are remembered is from the perspective of what is important today. The continual reconstruction of what is forgotten, remembered, or emphasized from the group's past allows collective memory to take on the function of a social narrative.

Narratives of the past are never complete, and may also be distorted, irrational, and conflict with other narratives on similar events (cf. Edy 2001, p. 56). Edy notes that it is not the narrative's plausibility of the facts that is important; rather, it is the meaning that the community associates with these facts that gives the narrative social worth in the construction of collective memory (2001, p. 56). Because of the narrative's power to construct a group's perception of itself, journalists' reconceptualizations of the past play a significant role in the construction of a group's national culture.

Anniversary narrative, national culture

Hall defines national culture as “a discourse—a way of constructing meanings which influences and organizes both our actions and our conception of ourselves” (Hall 1992, pp. 292–93). National cultures construct national identities “by producing meanings about ‘the nation’ with which we can *identify*; they are contained in the stories which are told about it, memories which connect its present with its past, and images which are constructed of it” (Hall 1992, pp. 292–93). According to Hall, the discourse of national culture is made up of five elements.

1. *The narrative of the nation* is a narrative about the nation’s successes and hardships, which provides a set of stories, images, places, events and rituals that allow us to feel part of the nation’s experiences. The narrative gives our lives meaning beyond the mundane, connecting us to a national destiny that pre-existed and will continue to exist beyond our lifetime.
2. *Origins, continuity, tradition and timelessness* focus on the group’s character being eternal and changeless, despite the varied experiences over time.
3. *The invention of tradition* or “the way we do things.” While traditions may not be as old as often thought, through repetitions of their practices they take on the façade of “the way we’ve always done things.” This implies “continuity with a suitable historical past.”
4. *Foundational myth* is a set of invented traditions, such as acts of remembrance, that provide us with a narrative to make sense of the confusions, disasters, and disarray of history, and see them not as tragedies but as national triumphs. The narrative also seeks to unite a disparate group of people as a community.
5. *Pure original people or “folk”* is the symbolic notion that the origins of our group can be traced to these people.

The anniversary narrative, with its emphasis on public remembering, is a discourse of national culture. The anniversary narrative has ritualized acts of selective remembrance and creates personal links between the audience and the narrative’s focus. This ensures that the narrative becomes “our” history, encompassing events beyond our lifetime. The links rely on cultural understandings of what norms and values the community identifies with. By illustrating that these same norms and values existed, exist and will continue to exist, the narrative gives a sense of permanence to the community’s identity. Finally, while the anniversary narrative is about the past, it does not end in the past. It connects with today’s

audience and carries the narrative’s triumph into the future, laying the foundational myth of the community.

The increasing number of studies on the relationship between journalistic representations and creating and/or maintaining collective memory (such as Edy 2006; Kitch 2003; Zelizer 1993) illustrates that the influence of journalism is acknowledged in shaping society’s understanding of itself. This is particularly so in the case of the genre of anniversary journalism, where the narrative takes unrelated events and enchains them around a theme to provide “new” perspectives on the past, “to encourage re-examination and integration” (Edy 2006, p. 95) in light of the narrative’s relevance for the present. This study adds to the discussion by analyzing how anniversary narrative uses rhetorical devices to both provide an insight into the past and stay relevant for the present. While the study does not claim that this is how all anniversary narratives use rhetorical devices, the study goes some way in drawing attention to the processes that anniversary journalism can use to reconstruct society’s collective memory.

Fiji’s indenture commemoration and the anniversary narrative

The narrative was produced by radio announcer Tej Ram Prem as an introduction to the documentary *Girmit Gāthā* or “Stories of indenture”. The program was first broadcast in 1979 on Radio Fiji 2, which at the time was Fiji’s only Hindi radio station (Usher & Leonard 1979, p. 25). *Girmit Gāthā* played at 8:30pm on Tuesday nights and focused on the life narratives of Indians who, between 1879 and 1916, had voyaged from Colonial India to Fiji. These Indians were to work mostly as indentured laborers on sugarcane plantations (cf. Ali 2004; Lal 2004a, 2004b; Naidu 2004 on Indian indenture; and Gounder 2011 on the *Girmit Gāthā* life narratives). Prem’s narrative precedes the laborers’ narratives on *Girmit Gāthā*. It begins by reframing the historical circumstances that brought Indians to Fiji and concludes in the present.

Part 1: Why indenture was introduced to Fiji

Strophe 1: *Factors behind implementation*

Stanza 1: *The beginning*

Line 1: On 10th October 1874, Fiji’s chiefs ceded the country over to Britain

- Stanza 2: Measles epidemic*
 Line 2: In 1875, that is, one year later, an English battleship brought a measles epidemic to Fiji
 Line 3: From this epidemic the Fijian's population dropped to one third
 Line 4: And on the Europeans' plantations the number of labourers suddenly dropped significantly
- Stanza 3: Sir Arthur Hamilton Gordon*
 Line 5: At that time Fiji's Governor Sir Arthur Hamilton Gordon had also been the Governor of Mauritius
 Line 6: That is, the Indian labourers' courage and hard work was very familiar to him
 Line 7: He also knew that the Indian labourers by contract, in other words, 'agreement', which our forebears by the name of 'Girmit' have immortalized
 Line 8: With the use of this term, how easily they could be brought to Fiji
- Strophe 2: Indian indenture in Fiji*
Stanza 4: Beginnings of indenture era
 Line 9: To resolve the Europeans' dire situation,
 Line 10: To provide labourers on their plantations,
 Line 11: Sir Arthur Gordon gave his blessings to the indenture system, the result of which was seen in 1879 when on the ship *Leonidas*, the first Indians, who were labourers, were dropped off in Fiji
- Stanza 5: End of indenture era*
 Line 12: The indenture era ended in 1920
 Line 13: That is, in thirty eight years, approximately sixty one thousand contract bound labourers were brought to Fiji
 Line 14: That is, after serving five years of indenture, the majority of Indians stayed back in Fiji

Part 2: The history of indenture

- Strophe 3: Reflections*
Stanza 6: Negative aspects
 Line 15: In indenture's origins where the torment of shame
 pain
 anguish
 tears
 illness
 and death
 is history
- Stanza 7: Positive aspects*
 Line 16: In that same origin
 fight
 determination
 courage
 and victory
 is also part of that history

Part 3: The laborers and us

- Strophe 4: Bridging then and now*
Stanza 8: Extolling the virtues of the labourers
 Line 17: Our forebears'
 hard work
 and sacrifices
 have made Fiji fruitful
- Stanza 9: Extolling the virtues of Fiji Indians*
 Line 18: In that same way
 their descendants too
 are today taking the country forwards
 toward development and progress

Girmīt Gāthā was produced as part of the centenary events to mark Fiji's indenture beginnings. The near non-existence of photos, letters, and other memorabilia brought a realization that a historical era was slipping away and that we needed to hear from the remaining handful of laborers before it was too late. So, *Girmīt Gāthā*, the collection of these laborers' oral narratives, is a crucial cornerstone to the community's cultural memory of indenture.

The community's interest in understanding what had brought their ancestors to Fiji ultimately lay in negotiating a cultural identity for Indians born in Fiji. This was a *hybrid identity* (Bhabha 1994)—a fusion of the cultures and languages of their great-grandparents' country of origin and that of the Fiji-Indians' own place of origin. So it carried a *double consciousness* (Du Bois 2009) summed up in the label "Fiji-Indian."

Yet the Fiji-Indian pan-ethnic label does not equate to homogeneity. In the 1970s, almost 100 years after the first Indian laborers arrived in Fiji, their descendants were beginning to fracture along both the sub-ethnic divide of North and South Indian, and the religious lines of Hindu and Muslim, with further schisms arising within each religion (Ali 1980, pp. 107–29; Kelly 1991).

At the same time, Fiji-Indians were becoming a prominent fixture in Fiji. This was evidenced in their increased numbers, political representation, and the establishment of Indian schools and religious institutions. Further, various landmarks were starting to bear Fiji-Indian names. So, at the time of the interviews, Fiji-Indians were able to reflect on the progress of Fiji-Indians from "unschooled" laborers to "educated" landowners. *Girmīt Gāthā*'s broadcast coincided with the community's interest in its history.

The radio played a crucial role in the indenture commemoration. As Fiji's population is spread over a number of islands, using radio meant the entire community could take part in the celebrations' without having to be physically present at the commemorative functions (cf. Moore 2005, p. 63; Scannell 1996, p. 76).

¹ At the time of the narrative's first broadcast, the only forms of media in Fiji were radio and newspaper. The three newspapers had limited production and distribution. The three English newspapers (*Fiji Times*, *Daily Post* and *Fiji Sun*) are produced daily and the Fijian (*Nai Lalakai*) and Hindi (*Shanti Dut*) newspapers are produced weekly. These newspapers did not reach the more isolated island communities until a few days after publication. Further, few people in these communities, particularly the older generation in rural areas, could read. So the radio played an important role in maintaining the community's links within itself and with the rest of Fiji (cf. Mangubhai & Mugler 2003, pp. 370–71).

The indenture centenary was a literary event, featuring poems by prominent individuals from the community on the themes of the shameful legacy of Indian indenture, the duplicity of colonial authorities and recruiters in getting Indians to Fiji, the Indians' naivety in agreeing to become indentured, and the laborers' immense hardship at the hands of the plantation authorities. These viewpoints represented and re-presented the viewpoints of the Fiji-Indian community. In his narrative, Prem continues this discourse but reframes it in a "new" perspective around the theme "we are one," making the indenture discourse relevant for the present, and letting the listeners carry on the discussion.

Method

Given that this is a highly fluent, pre-constructed² narrative told over the airwaves by an experienced radio announcer, it becomes important to analyze the manner of telling. To this end, I have used a three-way translation.³ The Fiji Hindi is on the left with a corresponding syntactic gloss and the translation is on the right. Using Jefferson's (2004) transcriptional notation, I marked for intonation (high ↑, low ↓), stress (word), acceleration (>word<), deceleration (<word>), pause (.), and inbreath (.h) on the original language.

To analyze, I implemented Gee's (1991) poetic structural approach. Gee places emphasis not only on *what* is said, but also *how* it is said. Although Gee's approach has, to my knowledge, been restricted to narratives produced or translated into English (cf. Ohlen 2003; Riessman 2008), I have applied his approach to the Fiji Hindi narrative because it is hard to closely represent prosodic features and poetic segments in a translation. The intonation pattern allows the narrative to be demarcated into poetic segments, as explained below.

Idea Unit is the smallest prosodic phrase. It contains a single focus made up of one piece of new information, signaled by pitch glide. In Prem's narrative, there is a slight pause marking the end of one Idea Unit and the start of the next. In addition, Prem uses a change in intonation to signal the end of an Idea Unit.

² Because of it being broadcast, the narrative was most probably read aloud. This would help explain the marked absence of disfluencies, such as repairs, hesitations, and false starts.

³ See Gounder (2011, pp. 47–66) for a detailed discussion on my transcriptional approach.

To illustrate, the Idea Units have been bracketed in the following sentence:

Line 1: (das oktohar athārā so chouhatar On 10th October 1874 Fiji's chiefs
 ↑me) (.h)
ten October eighteen hundred
seventy-four LOC
 (fijī ke samanto ↑ne)
Fiji POSS lord.PL
 (↓deš ko britan ko ↓samartit ↓kar ceded the country over to Britain
 ↓diya) (.)
country Britain ownership do PST

The first Idea Unit ends with a higher intonation on the locative and is followed by an inbreath. Similarly, the second Idea Unit ends with a higher intonation, followed by a slight pause. The final Idea Unit, however, has a falling intonation and ends with a pause—a typical pattern that Prem uses to mark the end of his Lines.

One or more Idea Units around a central argument form a Line. Each Line consists of a new piece of information while concurrently carrying forward old information. In Line 1 above, we begin with the date (1874). This is followed by the introduction of the major characters for that timeframe (Fiji's chiefs) and what they did that year (ceded Fiji to Britain). This example illustrates that the presence of old information builds *coherence* (Linde 1993) across the narrative while the new information provides *reportability* (Labov 1997)—a reason to continue listening to the unfolding narrative. This balance between coherence and reportability not only exists within a Line but also between Lines.

A group of lines, next to each other and with similar ideas, forms a stanza. Stanzas are large argument units, with one theme and no internal change of place, time or major characters. In the transcript above, Line 1 is in a separate stanza from Lines 2–4 because the timeframe and the protagonists are different for the two stanzas. In Line 1, the event takes place in 1874, while the events in Lines 2–4 occur in 1875. Line 1 focuses on the actions of Fiji's chiefs, while Lines 2–4 are about the effect of the measles epidemic on the indigenous Fijians. The use of a pause and a marked change in intonation pattern at the start of Line 2 also signal the movement between the two themes.

The combination of stanzas, often as related pairs around a central theme, is a strophe. Strophe 1 focuses on the reasons for implementing indenture while Strophe 2 is about how indenture was applied in Fiji. The penultimate strophe (Strophe 3) presents the cultural ideologies about indenture while the final Strophe (Strophe 4) draws parallels between the actions of the laborers and that of the listeners.

Finally, the largest section (Part) is a combination of strophes to form the story as a whole. Strophe 1 and Strophe 2 belong to the same part (Part 1), as together they give an overview of Indian indenture in Fiji. Strophe 3 and Strophe 4 are in their own parts as they each have a different focus from Part 1 and from each other.

This poetic representation is a reminder that the text we are analyzing is a re-presentation of an oral narrative, and that the telling of this narrative is an interactive process between the narrator and a wider unseen audience—an important aspect for this study.

A major drawback of Gee's method of narrative parsing is that it is quite laborious to identify the start and end of lines and stanzas. This means the method is challenging to implement with longer narratives (Elliott 2005, p. 56). Yet Prem's narrative is relatively short at 2 minutes and 10 seconds. Also, because Prem's narrative lacks disfluencies and is not a multiple teller narrative I did not have to worry about these aspects (but see Elliott 2005, pp. 54–56; Mishler 1997, 1999; and Riessman 2008, pp. 93–103).

Analysis

The narrative is in three Parts. Part 1 establishes a causal relationship for implementing indenture in Fiji. Part 2 discusses the emotive connotations associated with the term "indenture." Part 3 acts as a coda by linking the actions of the protagonists to the actions of the listeners. So it emphasizes the relevance of the narrative, and the documentary, for these listeners (cf. Labov 1972 on coda). In this section, the narrative's structural and thematic coherence is analyzed first, followed by the discourse features that signal the construction of collective national memory.

Structuring narrative cohesion

Part 1

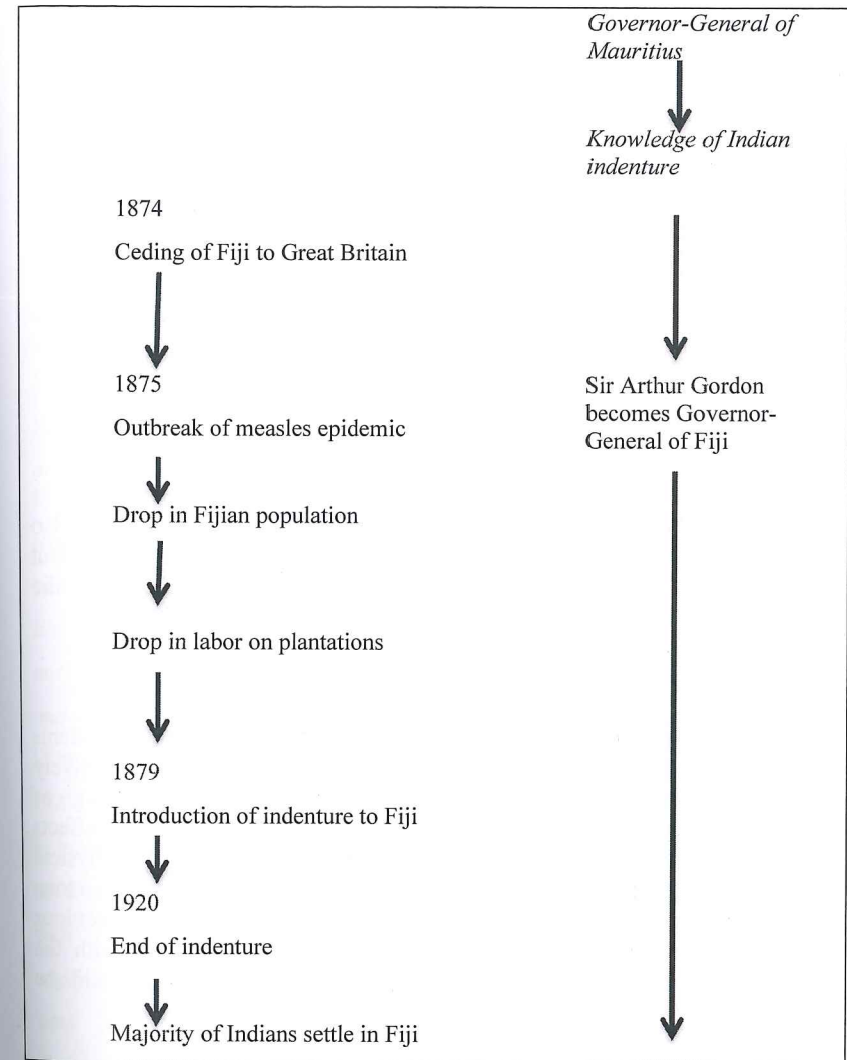
In this section of Prem's overview, a causal relationship becomes evident. I have emphasized this by using the strophe and stanza headings (for the transcript see earlier section *Fiji's indenture commemoration and the anniversary narrative* in this chapter).

Prem combines salient and habitual incidents to explain how Indians arrived in Fiji. He sees the causal chain as being triggered by two separate, yet interrelated events: the ceding of Fiji to Great Britain in 1874 and sailors from a visiting British warship introducing measles to Fiji in 1875. The two events are interrelated in that if Fiji had not been ceded to Great Britain, the warship would probably not have been in Fiji waters. Without the warship the epidemic may not have occurred, and some 60,000 Indians might have not been affected. The other salient events (for Prem's theme) are the first indenture ship arriving in Fiji in 1879 and Indian indenture being abolished in 1920. In addition to these one-off events are habitual incidents that occurred over time, such as the decline in the number of Fijians in the population and the regular shiploads of Indians arriving in Fiji.

Through temporal and thematic links (Fig. 5-1), the timeline in Prem's narrative becomes evident.

The dates impose temporality, but this is suspended by the background information on Sir Arthur Gordon provided in Stanza 3. As Gordon was the Governor-General of Mauritius from 1871 to 1874, the attributed knowledge is in analepsis and pre-dates even the first date in the narrative. We need to question why this information is placed in an otherwise chronological narrative. Mauritius was the first colony to introduce Indian indenture in 1834. Gordon, having been governor of Mauritius before becoming governor of Fiji, is attributed with first-hand knowledge of the Indian indenture system. This knowledge and his recommendation for implementing Indian indenture in Fiji lend credibility to Prem's assertion in Line 6 that Indians are hardworking and courageous.

Fig. 5-1: Causal chain for Part 1



The cohesion of Part 1 is seen in its strophe structure. Stanza 2 and Stanza 3 in Strophe 1 are each devoted to a separate factor behind implementing Indian indenture. Stanza 2 focuses on the effects of the measles outbreak, while Stanza 3 focuses on the Governor-General and his actions. Strophe 2 presents the convergence of the two factors in the form

of the first shipload of Indian laborers arriving in Fiji and marks the start of 38 years of indentured arrivals to Fiji.⁴

In Stanza 1 a single line sets the stage for the rest of the stanzas in Part 1. Other than Stanza 1, the final line in each stanza acts as a coda, explaining the relevance of that stanza to the theme of indenture:

- Stanza 2: And on the Europeans' plantations the number of labourers suddenly dropped significantly
- Stanza 3: With the use of this term [agreement], how easily they [the Indians] could be brought to Fiji
- Stanza 4: Sir Arthur Gordon gave his blessings to the indenture system the result of which was seen in 1879, when on the ship *Leonidas*, the first Indians, who were labourers, were dropped off in Fiji
- Stanza 5: After serving five years of indenture, the majority of Indians stayed back in Fiji

Further, as seen above, the last line in Part 1 indicates that Part 1 also serves to explain why the Fiji-Indian community was established. But elaboration on this theme is suspended until the final part (Part 3) of the narrative.

Part 2

In Part 2, the structure of the narrative changes from enchaining incidents to contrastive listing. As seen below, the items in Stanza 6 collectively depict indenture as filled with immense suffering. So the theme of Stanza 6 could be "the hardship of indenture." The list itemizes the effects of suffering this hardship, and moves from psychological to physical effects,⁵ with the final item—death—marking the ultimate effect. The tone in Stanza 7 is in sharp contrast to the inagentive tone of the previous stanza. Stanza 7 portrays an image of immense achievement, with the ultimate outcome being "victory." So the stanza's theme could be "triumph over adversity."

⁴ While indenture was not abolished until 1920, the transportation of laborers ended in 1916.

⁵ In Stanza 6 *piṛā* (pain) could mean either physical or psychological pain. When considering the preceding and following words, that both refer to emotional upheavals, *piṛā* in this context is taken to mean psychological pain.

The stanzas have parallel structure, and can be likened to poetic verse. For this purpose, I have listed the two stanzas next to each other first in Fiji Hindi and then in English. As the translation cannot do justice to the strophe's structure, I analyze the stanzas in the original language.

| Stanza 6 | Stanza 7 |
|---|---------------------------|
| jaʔhā girmʔit ka prayamʔbik ithiʔhās | ʔwahī |
| where indenture POSS origin history | REFLEX |
| šram yātnʔā shame torment | saṅʔarš battle |
| piṛʔā pain | saṅʔkalp determination |
| kleš | tir nišʔche |
| anguish | courage |
| āsʔu: | |
| tears | |
| bimārī | |
| illness | |
| our mout | ou vije |
| and death | and victory |
| kī ithihās he | ka ʔbhī ithihās he(.) |
| POSS history be.PROG | POSS too history be.PROG |
| in indenture's origins where | in that same origin |
| the torment of shame | fight |
| pain | determination |
| anguish | courage |
| tears | and victory |
| illness | |
| and death | |
| is history | is also history |

As seen from the excerpt above, the pattern of the two stanzas is:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Stanza 6 | Stanza 7 |
| jahā girmit ka prayambik ithihās | wahī |
| where indenture POSS origin history | REFLEX |
| List with [negative] connotations | List with [positive] connotations |
| kī ithihās he | ka †bhī ithihās he (.) |
| POSS history be.PROG | POSS too history be.PROG |

Stanza 7 continues the structure of Stanza 6. But rather than repeating the words that marked the start of Stanza 6, in Stanza 7 the anaphoric reference marker *wahī* is used to indicate the maintenance of this structure. Similarly, Stanza 7 ends with the repetition of the final units in Stanza 6, but with the insertion of *bhī*. The use of this word and the associated high intonation and stress hark back to Stanza 6. By doing so, through anaphoric reference and lexical repetition, cohesion is maintained between the two stanzas and they are also bound together (as Strophe 3) from the rest of the narrative.

Stanza 7 ends with a pause that is missing from the end of Stanza 6. This indicates the end of the verse form of Strophe 3. While Part 2 presents an image of indenture through the contrasting descriptors in the two stanzas, no mention is made of the laborers. They are the focus of Part 3, the final section of the narrative.

Part 3

As discussed above, Stanza 6 focuses on the negative aspects of indenture while Stanza 7 has a more positive outlook. When Part 2 is seen in relation to Part 3, the reason for this ordering becomes clear. The positive connotations in the final stanza of Part 2 flow into the first stanza of Part 3, so maintaining cohesion between the two Parts.

The use of parallelism and lists, both seen in Part 2, continue in Part 3. Yet unlike in Part 2, where parallelism is in terms of the structure of the stanzas, and lists contrast affective connotations associated with indenture, in Part 3 the parallelism is thematic and the aim is to show similarities between the positive actions of the laborers and those of the listeners:

Stanza 8

hamāre †purwajo ko
 1ST.POSS forebear POSS
 mahin†at masakat(.h)
 hard.work
 unkī kurbānī †se(.h)
 3RD.REM.POSS sacrifice LOC
 jeise fījī des abād †huā
 like Fiji country fruitful
 happen.PERF

Our forebears'
 hard work
 and sacrifices
 have made Fiji fruitful

Stanza 9

weise hī
 REFLEX be.PROG
 unko santān †bhī(.h)
 3RD.REM.POSS descendants too
 deś ko †āj
 country POSS today
 pragati our vikāś kī or
 improvement and progress OBJ towards
 le jā rahī †he(.)
 COP.PERF take go be.PROG

In that same way
 their descendants too
 are today taking the country forwards
 toward development and progress

While Part 3 has no structural parallelism, it does show contrasts between stanzas and anaphoric references. The two stanzas can be contrasted in terms of focal characters and timeframe. In Stanza 8, Prem uses the phrase "our forebears," while Stanza 9 uses "their descendants." Also, Stanza 8 is set in the past ("have made") while Stanza 9 is moving from the present into the future ("today taking the country forwards toward"). To avoid repetition of lexical items from Stanza 8, and to indicate the similarities between the themes of both stanzas, Stanza 9 uses anaphoric reference widely. The stanza starts with "In that same way," to refer to the "hard work and sacrifices" in Stanza 8. Stanza 9 also uses the third person "their" to refer to the laborers, and "the country" to refer to Fiji. Through these contrasts and anaphoric references, the two stanzas are sequenced together.

The suspended theme of Part 1, establishing the Fiji-Indian community, is elaborated on in Part 3. This final part of the narrative makes the link between "our forebears" and "their descendants" explicit. The fact that these descendants are the current radio listeners is indicated by a shift in tense from past to present. So Part 3 acts as an overall narrative coda by explaining to the listeners how this overview is relevant for them.

Structuring collective national memory

Through the analysis of a Fiji Hindi radio commemoration of Indian indenture, the article demonstrates that the anniversary narrative fulfills Hall's (1992) five elements to be a discourse of national culture.

1. *The narrative of the nation*: The indenture anniversary narrative provides a set of stories about the laborers who, through great personal hardship, successfully helped to modernize Fiji. The anniversary narrative's act of remembrance therefore takes the personal difficulties that the laborers experienced and endured when they knowingly or unwittingly became indentured and re-casts those difficulties in a narrative about the nation's triumphant beginnings to become a leader within the South Pacific region. Further, the narrative's coda traces a seamless process of the laborers' initiation of Fiji's modernization and the current and future generations' efforts in sustaining this modernization. In doing so, the coda emphatically weaves the audience into Fiji's destiny, giving personal actions of listeners a national significance.
2. *Origins, continuity, tradition and timelessness*: To ground the narrative as a construct "about us," the coda emphasizes continuity of shared worldviews over the generations (Gadamer 1975, p. 264), bridging, through parallelism, the efforts of the laborers and those of the listeners in the betterment of Fiji.
3. *The invention of tradition*: Through the coda's links between the laborers' positive actions and that of the current (and future) audience, we have the making of tradition, ingrained in a favorable past, which, therefore, is all the more likely to continue. The attributes extolled in Part 3 are taken to be symbolic of Indian practice, inculcating cultural values and norms into what it means to be "Fiji-Indian."
4. *Foundational myth*: To create a "new" Fiji-Indian identity, the anniversary narrative, unlike academic discourses on indenture,⁶ seeks to construct a narrative that unites the listeners. In the narrative, Prem mentions the laborers six times. But he does not call them *Girmitya*, the term the laborers coined to refer to themselves and which is commonly used in the Fiji-Indian community. Prem's preferred term is *Bharatyē masdur* (which occurs four times—in Lines 6, 7, 11, 13), which literally means "Indian laborer." The term emphasizes the commonality of India as the laborers' place of origin, and

⁶ For discussions on religion, see Ali (1980); on gender, see Lal (2000); and on ethnicity, see Naidu (2004).

- simultaneously de-emphasizes that the laborers came from different Indian regions. On two occasions, Prem uses the term *Purwajo* meaning "forebears." The first is as part of a relative clause within the analepsis at Line 7 in Stanza 3. The second is in Stanza 8. Both times the term occurs within the set phrase "our forebears." By often repeating the first person, Prem aligns himself with the radio listeners and emphasizes his in-group membership, while also establishing the participant role of the targeted addressee (Talbot 2007, p. 52) in furthering his theme "we are one."
5. *Pure original people or "folk"*: Despite the stress on common origin through the referral terms, the spatial frame of India is marked by its absence. The narrative is firmly set in Fiji, signifying a distancing from India, physically and emotionally. No mention is made of the recruitment process or even the voyage to Fiji. The first ship "materializes" in Fiji waters. The focus on Fiji and the lack of focus on India holds a cautionary note for the Fiji-Indian community of the time for the need to let go of the skirts of *Bharat Mata*, or "Mother India," and to start seeing Fiji as the foundation of Fiji-Indian history.

The anniversary narrative therefore commemorates not only Fiji's indenture beginnings but also the beginnings of the Fiji-Indian community, with the indentured laborers as the founding members of this community. By emphasizing the "shared" indenture "experiences" of "our" forebears, the narrative works to promote a "national" Fiji-Indian "culture" (Hall 1992, p. 293).

Conclusion

In this study, applied linguistics contributes to the empirically grounded approach to understanding the world we inhabit as discourse, culturally and historically held together by the threads of narrative. Of interest here are narratives that are performed in the public sphere, and how these normative discourses in turn become our textile yardsticks by which we negotiate who we are (Bamberg 2004, p. 360). The study contends that journalism's anniversary narrative reconstructs national identity. To demonstrate, this chapter used Gee's (1991) poetic approach to narrative parsing—also demonstrating the usefulness of his approach for non-English oral narratives. The chapter used narrative analysis to demonstrate that journalists link discrete temporal and spatial events into a thematic causal chain and reassign agency to characters. Through these historical "facts," produced within the context of a radio documentary, journalists re-

create a coherent and authoritative narrative from their position as sanctioned social interpreters. This chapter further demonstrates that journalists appeal to an audience by using inclusive pronouns and drawing parallels between the praiseworthy actions of the protagonists and those of the audience. In so doing, the narrative maintains a place in the collective memory of the culture.

The purpose of this book is to raise awareness of the significant nuances that come to the fore through the interaction of applied linguistics with other disciplines. The analysis of media text as a discourse of power provides the ideal framework to showcase this interaction. Discussing the construction of anniversary narratives within the sociopolitical climate of the time in turn provides an opportunity to explore the complex hegemonic forces that are at play in discursively constructing national identities.

Given the study's empirical nature, which requires the study to remain grounded in the text, the study cannot provide a rigorous argument of the influence such public narratives have on the audience members' conceptualization of "who we are." Nor can the study attribute motives to Prem to explain why the narrative is constructed in this manner.

The study exemplifies how applied linguistics focuses on contextual intersections to explore how we construct and are (re)constructed through discourse. Prem uses the public sphere of the radio to draw on the community's collective memory to (re)tell the story of indenture and to (re-)present indenture as a shared history and as a convenient start of the community. In so doing, Prem's narrative demonstrates its power as a normative discourse in determining who to include in the discursive "we." But, just as Prem's narrative is one interpretation of the historical narrative of indenture, it is possible to have counter-readings of his narrative when seen from other points of intersections. By continuing this discussion through further studies, we acknowledge the multilevel web of influence that discourse has in constructing society.

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