Chapter 4

‘The Namesake’: A Psycholinguistic Study

The Researcher would like to quote here Gerry T. M. Altmann from his research paper ‘The Language Machine: Psycholinguistics in review’, where he reviews Psycholinguistics as the study of, “…how infants represent the speech they hear to how they acquire the first vocabulary and how later, as adults, they represent and access words in the mental lexicons (both spoken and written)”. (Altmann 2)

In accordance with the same statement, the psycholinguistic study will reveal Lahiri’s acquisition and comprehension of languages of both the continents, India and America, and her production of the same in written language.

4.1 Lexical Analysis:

To study the words or lexis of a work is called ‘Lexical Analysis’. The analysis highlights the lexicon selection by Lahiri.

4.1.1 Hyphenated words:

Yellow-and-white-checkered paper (1) sand-colored hair (2) twenty-four (23) hand-holding (23) off-white (4) in-laws (4) after-dinner tea (5) black-and-white photograph (5) jell-O (5) pen-and-ink (6) off-white (8) lentil-sized (8) scholarly-looking (8) green-and-white striped shirt (8) first-class-firs (9) ninety-nine pounds. (9) Extra-large (9) heart-shaped (10) cross-legged (10) grey-faced (11) four-thirty (11) thick-rimmed glasses (11) twenty-two (13) Howrah-Ranchi (13)

Lahiri’s writing marks the use of hyphenated words as a feature of her writing style. Hyphenated words have been used in The Namesake for pointing the minute yet specific
details of things and persons. As a story teller Lahiri takes special care of displaying all the minute details with caution. Lahiri surprises her readers with her watchfulness. Lahiri is a master observer of niceties.

### 4.1.2 Compound words:

Underfoot (5) photograph (5) lunchtime (5) stethoscope (5) treetops (6) nightgown (5) bedroom (7) newspaper (7) sandalwood (8) oversight (8) crisscross (9) sandalwood (9) handshakes (12) childhood (13) birthdays (13) overcoat (14) outside (14) flashlight (20) haircut (24) handsome (24) grandmother (24) saltwater (27) newlywed (29) typewriter (29) somewhere (287) homework (288) handwriting (289) sideboard (290) headboard (291) downstairs (291)

Jhumpa Lahiri appears to be very fond of using compound words. The entire work is awash with them. A cursory glance on these words make the reader realize that they all belong to human world. All these words indicate the corporal portions and their needs. They speak about the materialistic domain of America. American society is generally seen as focused on an individual, his needs, his belongings, etc. The story of *The Namesake* also throws light on the lives of individual characters.

### 4.1.3 Blending:

Murshidabad silk sari (2):

Ashima Ganguli has to remove her Murshidabad silk sari in order to change a gown, as she is in the hospital for her first delivery. The sari here stands as a very emotional component for her. In form of sari actually, Ashima finds herself wrapped completely with the love and affection of her family, even in the foreign Land. Removal of sari for her is
emotional separation from the motherland and a realization that she, alone has to adjust herself in the new world.

pujo money (12):

Ashoke has been portrayed as a book-lover character. It was his fascination towards book that he used to spent his Pujo money amount for purchasing the books instead of using it for any religious work. In India study of books are equally respected as any task of religion. Ashoke’s use of that money also indicates his respect towards the studies of books.

In India, sari is a traditional wear by Women. Indians have multiple variety of saris and each one of them demonstrates their religious or customary relativity and relevance with them. Lahiri comprehends this emotional relativity of women with their variety of saris. Lahiri apprehends this emotion and religious outlook of Indian people how much they respect books. She also realizes the importance of Pujo money. In India it is a custom to share a part of earnings in the religious works. That’s why she has placed it so beautifully in the novel. She has displayed a good utilization of this money. Lahiri’s aptness in comprehending such details is praiseworthy. Other examples have been cited below.

Dum Dum Airport (4) Desh magazine (6) Gariahat Road (12) Howrah-Ranchi Express (13) Margo soap (17) Ghatshila and Dhalbhumgarh stations (17) bihari couple (17) kathakali dance (65)

4.1.4 Code-Mixing:

deknam (25) bhalonam (26):

Indian society always celebrates the system of two or even more names of an individual. One name is stored for formal acquaintances and other names indicate the cordial
relationships of others with the person. Indians celebrates relationships attaching it with their culture. Both the words here suggest for formal name.

mashi, pishi, mama, maima, kaku and jethu (81):

All the words denotes relationship. They are commonly used terms in Bengali homes. The variety of vocatives for various person stand for their individual relationships. They reflects the emotional and cultural attachment of people with one another. The following are the other such examples from the work.

Sari (1) Calcutta (4) Kashmiri shawl (6) kohl (7) Cuticura (7) chappals (8) piri (10) Chowringhee and gariahat (12) pujo (12) Tatanagar (18) Alipore (19) Buro (26) Dida (237) Nandis, Mitras, Banerjees, halwa, annaprasan (238) payesh (239) Ma (40) Baba (41)

Lahiri’s use of code-mixing highlights her knowledge of Bengali language, and Bengal. She has placed everything so spontaneously that they seem to appear with her natural flow of writing, which comes after a natural remembrance of them by the author. The abundance of Indian words are the result of parental drilling, as stated in the behaviourist theory. Description of Indian people and contexts work as stimulus for Lahiri, and in response such words come out because of their reinforcement in her mind by her Parents.

4.1.5 Repetition:

“No one hears her, no nurse rushes to her side.” (4):

Ashima Ganguli has been hospitalized for her first delivery. Already being in a foreign land, she experiences a sense of loneliness. It’s her first child to come in this world, and she is away from her home and homeland, so, she feels very nostalgic at this moment. She yearns for her family members to be near her, surrounding her and caressing her. Repeated use of negation indicates her strong feeling of being alone in a foreign land, and
without any sense of belongingness. Ashima feels herself emotionally deprived at this moment.

“That is correct. That is correct.” (58):

The sentences occur during a conversation between Mgrs. Lapidus and Ashoke, when Ashoke and Ashima go for their son’s nursery admission. A confusion takes place with the name of Gogol. Gogol’s parents want that Gogol’s school name should be Nikhil but on his legal documents, it is Gogol. Moreover, Gogol, himself does not respond on calling him as Nikhil, so Mrs. Lapidus feels confused. Ashoke tries his best to make her understand but fails. The sentences express Ashoke’s emphasis upon the thing that as being the father of Gogol, his son’s name should be decided according to his wish, as it happens in India.

Lahiri comprehends such things about Indian family’s setting and atmosphere, and she produces it so well. Only a few illustrations can be cited from the novel.

“…the off-white tiles of the floor, the off-white panels of the ceiling …” (4)

“Jell-O, Jell-O” (5)

“Countless aunts, countless cousins” (9)


“Still seated, still dressed.” (16)

4.1.6 Vocatives:

“Hello, Gogol,” he whispers… (28):

In the hospital, Ashoke learns that he can’t leave with his baby without making a registration of his son’s name. He feels himself hooked in such a situation and remembers of
a writer suddenly, named Nikolai Gogol, as it was a book by the same writer which accompanied him in his survival in a fatal train accident, in the same way, he looked at the name of the author as a help to him in rescuing himself from such a situation. So, he names his son as Gogol, and Gogol responds to it smilingly, thus again he felt it as a help from the author. Naming his son on the author’s name shows Ashoke’s inner feeling of gratitude towards the author.

“Dida, I’m coming,” Ashima had said. (237):

Bengali people prefer using this phrase to ‘good-bye’. They don’t like the use of the later phrase. It was a sentence spoken by Ashima on her departure to a foreign land. She takes blessings of her grandmother by touching her feet and says so. ‘Dida’ is a Bengali word to address one’s grandmother. In India, all relations possess a special name and use of such names or vocatives shows affection of their relationships. Ashima was very close to her grandmother. The novel also consists of some more examples of vocatives, given below.

“Rana? Can you hear me?” (45)

“Baba, I can’t.” (55)

“Gogol, take the pen.” (40)

4.1.7 Negation:

“No need to worry, he chirps, putting a stethoscope to Ashima’s belly, patting her hand, admiring her various bracelets.” (7):

The initial position of negation in this sentence shows the doctor’s rejection of Ashima’s fear of unknown. Ashima is nervous about her first delivery and feels nostalgic
about the absence of her family members. The doctor just casts off all her worries and tries to relax her by admiring her jewellery.

“No, no, that is not a name, Ashima explains.” (26):

After the delivery when some of Ashima and Ashoke comes to see the baby, with affection they call the baby ‘buro’, cuddling him, so the nurse takes it as Baby’s name. Then, Ashima denies it to clarify that it is not the child’s real name, it’s just out of love. The repeated negation demonstrates Ashima’s strong denial to the same. Other such examples are below.

“No one spat on the sidewalks.” (11)

"Not this world, he said, glancing disappointedly about the interior of the train.” (11)

"Nothing here, Ashoke heard someone say.” (13)

“None of this was supposed to happen.” (14)

Lahiri’s use of negation advocates strong strictness, denial and rejection. It shows the human limit to accept anything.

4.1.8 Interjections:

“Oh, Alan,” she says, “let’s have another one of these.” (233):

Alan and Judy, neighbours to Ashima and Ashoke, have come to pay a greeting visit on the arrival of young baby Gogol. Judy asks Alan to show the clothing bag which consists of their children’s old clothes. They have brought these clothes to share with Ashima. In America People work on sharing basis. Here, Lahiri’s shows up her American spirit. It reflects Lahiri’s getting hold of American culture.
“Oh” (129):

This expression comes from Gogol, when he receives a sudden piece of information from Maxine that she lives with her parents. Gogol was invited by Maxine on dinner. Maxine’s delivery of such information comes as a bolt from the blue to Gogol. The reason being that it is not customary in America to live with one’s parents. In America everybody prefers to be at their own, on their own support to themselves. Thus, it surprises Gogol.

Lahiri also uses this expression to introduce her readers with this facet of American life. She continues to maintain her readers’ interest. More examples are:

“Oh, Nikhil, it’s too awful, she eventually says on one of these occasions, barely three months after them ‘he met.” (139)

“Oh? Where did she go?” (157)

“Oh, nick. Your mother called, Gerald had said, glancing up from the screen.” (170)

“Oh, no, Gogol says, shaking his head, laughing, at once insulted and oddly aroused.” (203)

“Oh, Nikhil,” (237)

4.1.9 Exclamations:

“Wait! He heard a voice cry out.” (18):

It is an expression from a member of the rescue team when they receive a crying voice of Ashoke under lying down under the debris of train accident. Ashoke is almost unconscious and holding a book. The view of the book by the rescue team helps in saving Ashoke. It is a horrible scene of mess of a train accidents. Many people are dead, and Ashoke
is lying among them, half fainted, holding a book. The helper gets a view of the book holding hand and asks the others to stop by and help the man.

“An American boy must be rich!” (40):

This is an exclamation by one of Ashoke and Ashima’s Bengali friends. On the Annaprasan ceremony of Gogol, everybody cheer up the baby boy to pick a dollar note. According to the tradition, a few things are placed in a plate and showed to the baby, and the baby what so ever picks up, is taken as his interest, and it is predicted that after his grown up, he will pursue the same in his life. So everybody wants young Gogol to lift up money, so that he can become a rich man. In America it is very important to be rich to lead a good life. A few more illustrations of exclamations are given below.

“No! His father protests.” (40)

“Go, Gogol! His classmates shout o golden autumn days as he runs the bases or sprints in a dash.” (67)

“Smith”! They holler. “Collins!” “Wood!” (69)

“Anagram!” (239)

4.1.10 Use of Abbreviations:

A.G. (4) U.S.A (8) MIT (21) MBTA (42) CPIM (238) NYU RCA (74) J.E. (110) ABCD (118) MET (147) CVS (181) ID (261) DC (257) TAs (255) MLA (283) NYU (264) BBC (257) ID (257) D.C. (257)

The use of short form of words project the American Lahiri. As a citizen, she has developed this acquisition of American culture. Americans prefer short form of words and even names. They believe more in saving time and using it for materialistic goals.
4.1.11 a) Use of Indian words:

Ashima Ganguli (1) Calcutta (1) sari (1) Bengali (2) Dum Dum Airport (4) Desh
magazine (6) Kashmiri shawl (6) kohl (7) Cuticura (7) chappals (8) piri (10) Madhabi
Mukherjee (9) Gariahat Road (12) pujo (12) Howrah-Ranchi Express (13) Margo soap (17)
Ghatshila and Dhalumgarh stations (17) bihari couple (17) Tatanagar (18) Alipore (19) Buro
(26) Dida (237) Nandis, Mitras, Banerjees, halwa, annaprasan (238) Nandis, Mitras,
Banerjees, (238) payesh (239) Ma (40) Baba (41) DurgaPujo (41) Sonali (62) kathakali dance
(65) deknam (25) bhalonam (26) mashi, pishi, mama, maima, kaku and jethu (81)

b) Use of U.S. words:

Massachusetts Avenue, Harvard Yard, Mount Auburn Hospital. (2) Beverly, Lois,
Carol (23) Amherst Street (4) Charles River, Memorial Drive, Voice of America, (5) New
Card (102)

Jhumpa Lahiri has shown a beautiful balance between her Indian and American
acquisitions. She provides her readers a good list of vocabulary from both the continents.
Lahiri has also given some space to French words in this novel. They display her knowledge
about the L3.

4.2 Graphological Features:

4.2.1 Capitalization:

THE BABY, a boy, (22):
The second chapter has this beginning. The capital words carry the news of Ashoke and Ashima’s baby’s arrival. The beginning marks the happy event of the couple’s life. This beginning gives her readers a surprise and happy beginning.

THEY MARRY WITHIN A YEAR (219):

To highlight the event of Gogol and Maushmi’s marriage, capitalisation has been taken in use. Marriage is a significant event of one’s life. The marriage of both the characters within a year is relevant to be marked because of two reasons. First that it was an arranged marriage, second it is not a part of American culture to settle down with a person so early. American people took time in their relationship. The detail seems very fascination to the Researcher because it might consists of some autobiographical note. It may be possible that Lahiri herself has to marry her man of choice earlier than she would have desired in her relationship, under parental pressure. More examples of capitalization are given below.

ON A STICKY AUGUST EVENING… (1) “MIT” (2) BOACVC-10 (4) U.S.A. (8) QUESTION AUTHORITY! GIVE A DAMN! BAN THE BRA! PEACE! (19) GO LEFT, GO RIGHT, And GO SLOW. (66) GOGOL’S FOURTEENTH BIRTHDAY (72) PLENTY OF PEOPLE (97) CHILDREN AT PLAY (146) USED (288)

Lahiri has used capitalization at the beginning of each chapter, and to show some short form of words, and some messages.

4.2.2 Italicization:


_The Namesake_ preserves a good amount of the use of italicization by Lahiri. She has used italicization for listing the books as the novel contains a good number of the name list of books. It has been used to draw reader’s attention towards the names of books, magazines or other details. Lahiri is very fond of books, and so she does not forget to draw a special attention of her readers towards them.

4.2.3 Dash:

Ashima remembers their apartment with abiding horror—just beyond the ceiling yet so different from her own, piles everywhere, piles of books and papers, piles of dirty plates on the kitchen counter, ashtrays the size of serving platters heaped with crushed-out cigarettes. (19):

This is a very fine example which shows the contrast between the home arrangement of an Indian and of an American. The Researcher is full of all praise for the author to bring such a minute observation here, in the novel. It is not an easy thing to gulp in for a person who used to keep everything well maintained, to bear the sight of completely a messed up home, full of pies of clothes, empty bottles of beer, uncleansed dishes etc. But this is a common scene from American Life. Lahiri, indeed comprehends such initial expression of an Indian after the view from an American house. Such examples mark Lahiri’s comprehension of the differences between the two cultures and she has produced them so well.
“Living with a pet name and a good name, in a place where such distinctions do not exist—surely that was emblematic of the greatest confusion of all.” (59):

Lahiri has portrayed the second generation Indians conflict about adjusting with their two names in a place where people used to have only one and that too is pronounced in short form. For Gogol, it is very difficult. It is one more example that speaks about Lahiri’s comprehension of India culture and her attempt to maintain a balance between the two cultures. In India, people generally have pet names and good names. Pet names are used at home and good names are for social use. On the contrary in America, there is no such culture. People have one name, and that is also cut short for convenient use. There are other examples of dashes cited below.

“The rest of it—the calls, the flowers that are everywhere, the visitors, the hours they spend sitting together in the living room unable to say a word, mean nothing.” (89)

“A cup of tea, a conversation—did he have no time for that?” (95)

“The Name he had so detested, here hidden and preserved – that was the first thing his father had given him.” (289)

“Gogol takes a hit, but as he sits there, holding his breath, he regrets It—he is already starved.” (115)

Lahiri has provided comparatively more space to dashes instead of dots. There are hardly examples of dots. There may be one or two examples of the use of dots. The very less use of dots confirms that Lahiri has a fixed mind and details to be put before readers. She does not want them to fill anything, just go through with the flow of details which she intend for them to go. Lahiri has come up as a mature writer in *The Namesake*.

4.2.4 Colon:
“It’s the consequence: motherhood in a foreign land.”(6)

Ashima Ganguli is in her pregnancy time, and keeps on remembering her family in India. She keeps on detailing about each and everything, she is going through. The colon highlights Ashima’s emotional suffering. Ashima does not feel comfortable with the ways of life in America. But the upper most agony for her is pregnancy in a foreign land. It is a new experience of life, and there is no family member to assist her, care her and guide her.

“Ashoke’s mother would consider humiliating: eating alone, driving herself to work in snow and sleet, seeing her children and grandchildren, at most, three or four times a year.” (27)

American life is such that an individual have to learn to survive alone. It gives them independency and responsibilities as an individual. On the contrary in India, society is family based. Family decides things for an individual. Everybody cooperates in each other’s works. Things are done on sharing basis. People live in a family, took food together and share everything together with the family. So, for Ashoke’s mother all such things are painful to be alone. More examples of the colon have been placed below.

“There is a pen-and-ink drawing on page eleven by her father, an illustrator for the magazine: a view of the North Calcutta skyline sketched from the roof of their flat one foggy January morning.”(6)

“In the beginning, in the evenings, his family goes for drives, exploring their new environs bit by bit: the neglected dirt lanes, the shaded back roads, the farms where one could pick pumpkins in autumn and buy berries sold in green cardboard boxes in July.” (29)

“For their daughter, good name and pet name are one and the same: Sonali, meaning she who is golden.” (233)
“They have met so many Bengalis that there is rarely a Saturday free, so that for the rest of his life Gogol's childhood memories of Saturday evenings will consist of a single, repeated scene: thirty-odd people in a three-bedroom suburban house, the children watching television or playing board games in a basement, the parents eating and conversing in the Bengali their children don't speak among themselves.” (233)

“In the supermarket they let Gogol fill the cart with items that he and Sonia, but not they, consume: individually wrapped slices of cheese, mayonnaise, tuna fish, hot dogs.(235)

“He recognizes pieces of himself in road signs: GO LEFT, GO RIGHT, GO SLOW.” (235)

Lahiri has practically given instances from the lives of first and second generation people which cause their agony, unrest and misery.

4.2.5 Semi-Colon:

“It is the first time in her life she has slept alone, surrounded by strangers; all her life she has slept either in a room with her parents, or with Ashoke at her side. (23)

Indians are domestic people. Ashima feels herself at unrest on finding herself alone in the hospital. She is already nostalgic about her family during her pregnancy, and moreover, she has to stay all alone in the hospital without her husband, the one soul she knows in a foreign land. The semicolon adds explanation of the statement given in the first clause.

“Ashima smiled, amused by her mother’s salesmanship; it had taken her the better part of the year to finish the cardigan, and still her mother had had to do the sleeves.” (8):

Ashima has been visited by a family for marriage purpose. On this her mother welcomes them and starts praising her daughter Ashima. She narrates everything to prove
that her daughter is the most suitable one for this marriage proposal. Ashima feels amuse on this. The semicolon describes the real status of the fact stated by Ashima’s mother.

“He is fastidious about his clothing; their first argument had been over a sweater she’d shrunk in the washing machine.”(10)

“He was travelling on the 83 Up Howrah-Ranchi Express to visit his grandparents for the holidays; they had moved from Calcutta to Jamshedpur upon his grandfather’s retirement from the university.’”(13)

The semi colons provide extra details or real status of things said in the earlier part of the sentence, thus provide readers enough details, and don not let the readers’ attention wander here or there. It keeps the plot tightly knitted.

4.2.6 Comma:

“A curious warmth floods her abdomen, followed by a tightening so severe she doubles over, gasping without sound, dropping the onion with a thud on the floor.”(2)

Lahiri put all the details with the use of commas so well knitted that it keeps the reader completely engrossed in the story. The sentence combined of so many specifics bound the reader to know what is coming next. The sentence creates a dramatic beginning to the first chapter. It describes the pregnancy stage of Ashima Ganguli. She is preparing food in her apartment in America and suddenly faces such strong symptoms of pregnancy.

“He imagined not only walking, but walking away, as far as he could from the place in which he was born and in which he had nearly died.” (14)
Ashoke and Ashima both have different outlooks. Throughout the story Ashima keeps on missing her homeland and being at home, on the opposite, since after his train accident, Ashoke dreams of leaving his place and going abroad, in search of a new world.

“On a sticky august evening two weeks before her due date, Ashima Ganguli stands in the kitchen of a Central Square apartment, combining Rice Krispies and Planters peanuts and chopped red onion in a bowl.” (5)

“For it was one thing to be pregnant, to suffer the queasy mornings in bed, the sleepless nights, the dull throbbing in her back, the countless visits to the bathroom.”(6)

“The second, a newspaper cartoonist who knew her father, had been hit by a bus in Esplanade and lost his left arm.” (8)

“The air was damp, and in spite of the pins Ashima's hair, thickest of all the cousins', would not lie flat.” (9)

Commas are used to add details, and so they do.

4.2.7 Quotation Marks:

“I'll be back,” Ashoke says to her in Bengali, and then a nurse adds: “Don’t you worry, Mr. Ganguli. She’s got a long ways to go. We can take over from here.”(23)

The quoted phrases in the sentence give assurance and provide comfort to the listener, Ashima. Ashima has been admitted to a hospital for her delivery, but her husband has to leave, so he gives the first quoted phrase to make her comfortable and feel that she is not alone. The second one is given by the nurse to Ashoke to comfort him and assure him that all will be taken care by the hospital staff, and so he need not to worry.

“Goddamnit, goddamn you, this is hell, she hears one of them say.” (23)
Ashima is in an American hospital. In her nearby an American lady has been admitted. She has got into an argument with her husband and using above words, put into quotations. Use of such words is very embarrassing for Ashima. For her, an Indian wife never uses such expressions for or in the presence of her husband. The quotation highlights the specific things, annoying for Ashima. More examples are given below:

“"Yes, all right, Ashima says."" (6)

“"I cannot."" (6)

“"You can. Squeeze my hand. Squeeze as tight as you like."" (7)

“"As long as there are ten finger and ten toe, Ashima replies."" (7)

There are many quoted sentences in the novel, which help in bringing the characters of story alive and realize the reader that they have their own voice and understanding of things. Lahiri has used them to keep the work more general than autobiographical.

4.2.8 Assertive sentences with Question Marks:

""Like this?"" (15)

“"Perhaps the Gangulis know them? ‘I beg your pardon, madam? ‘Good name?’” (231)

""The reason being?"" (232)

“"Written at the top of a résumé? Centered on a business card?’” (51)

""Want to smoke a bowl?"" (53)

""My name?"" (61)

Lahiri uses question marks at the end of simple sentences. Indian people have this habit of using “Na” in Hindi at the end of sentences for knowing the response of the listener.
Thus, even though she denies her ties with India, still this cultural trait spontaneously comes forth in her writing. The reason can be understood through Native Language Magnet Modal theory which suggests that young children learn their mother tongue effortlessly. (Kuhl 26) Lahiri, also being an Indian because of her birth from Indian Parents has this familiarity with Indian phonetic system. And so, it naturally comes out in her writings. She understands this habit of using Hindi ‘Na’ and she unconsciously portrays the same in translation of the same in English language.

4.2.9 Parenthesis:

(He had also published under the name Yanov, and once signed his work "OOOO" in honour of the four o's in his full name.) (50)

The work has just one example of parenthesis. The reason may be that extra details have already been placed with the help of commas and semicolon.

4.3 Syntactic Features:

In Syntactic analysis, one studies the syntax of a text. A study of the structure of sentences and their types etc. is made.

4.3.1 Use of But:

“But she has gathered that Americans, in spite of their miniskirts and bikinis, in spite of their hand-holding on the street and lying on top of each other on the Cambridge Common, prefer their privacy.”(23):

The sentence discloses the reality of life of American society. Lahiri at times seems very fair in detailing things. Here, Ashima realizes that even though American society is claimed to be very open, but in reality they are open for their own selves not for others. This
sense of detachment, hurts Ashima. Now Ashima is suffering from detachment from the new world and distance from her own world. It may be possible that Lahiri’s own parents might have experienced the same. So, it automatically comes in her writing as well.

“But most of all he loved the Russians.” (12):

Ashoke Ganguli is very fond of reading books. ‘But’ here specifically makes statement about his choice of reading and that is writings by Russian authors. The reason may be the realistic temperament of their stories. Realism brings shades directly from real lives. More examples have been given below.

“But the lantern's light lingered, just long enough for Ashoke to raise his hand, a gesture that he believed would consume the small fragment of life left in him.” (13)

“But now, with a baby crying in her arms, her breasts swollen with milk, her body coated with sweat, her groin still so sore she can scarcely sit, it is all suddenly unbearable. UT a letter will.” (17)

"But better to be careful, his father persists.” (74)

4.3.2 Wh Type Question:

“What does it mean, dilated? she asks,” (23):

Ashima Ganguli is in a U.S. hospital for her first delivery. The doctor converse with Ashima in English language, where she fails to understand a particular term and so, she enquires about the same from the doctor. ‘What’ here reflects Ashima’s incompetency to understand the terms in L3. Moreover it states her suspension of something being problematic. It reveals the psychological snags of Ashima Ganguli and how does it feel being in a foreign land, having your first pregnancy, and facing a person using L3. It mirrors the
psychological condition of a person facing a critical situation of his or her life in absence of MT, in a foreign land. More illustrations are:

"What's his name? Buro? Patty inquires brightly, bearing another tray of baked chicken for Ashima." (17)

"What are you saying, Ashima?" (20)

“How about a little walk? …” (6)

“Won’t he be there? She’d asked,” (9)

"Are you still planning to visit in December? he asks." (25)

"How is Dida? Has anything else happened to her?" "Still alive," Rana says. (25)

4.3.3 Yes-No Questions:

"Is that a no?" He nods. "Yes." (232):

Mrs. Lapidus asks Gogol whether he approves the change in his name by his parents, or not. Gogol replies in negative. Americans are strong believers of individual liberty. They do not support Parental interference in the lives of their kids. That’s why Gogol’s name is registered on the choice of Gogol, instead of his parents’. This short conversation indicates the clarity of idea to be discussed. Moreover, Americans are used to short conversations.

“I hope you don’t mind." "No problem," Gogol says. (40):

The conversation took place between Ashoke and Gogol. Ashoke picks up a book from Gogol’s bed, and informs him that he has already gone through that book, so will he mind it? Gogol simply indicates that he has no problem with that. The sentences clearly reveal the difference between 1st generation migrant and second generation. The first
sentence is fully explained, while the second one is very short, highlights the mood of the speaker. More examples are:

"You don't go here, do you?" "No," he says, his heart pounding. (48)

"No," his father says. (62)

“Is this your father?” "Yes, that's him," Gogol hears himself saying.” (85)

“"Do you remember that night?” he asks, hopeful that she will. “No. My mother was always forcing me to do things like that.” (100)

4.3.4 Very Short Sentences:

“I cannot.” (6) “Any Minute.” (11) three lives by thirty. (21) like this? (23) Names can wait. (24) “Remember that.” (238) “Now go.” (238) I think so. (23) Not yet. (23) boy or girl? (234) the pen. (40) and Baba? (44) Very soon. (45) Write to me. (45) me too. (45) yes. (58) that is correct. (58)

The use of short sentences in Lahiri’s fiction can be evaluated under the light of Michael Tomasello’s Usage-Based Theory, which suggests that a child can learn language through the speeches of people around him. (Tomasello 23) So, does Lahiri. Being citizen of American society, such syntactic structures naturally become part of her writings.

4.3.5 Very Long Sentences:

There are many examples of long sentences in the work.

“Looking more closely, she saw the shoemaker’s name written on the insides, in gold lettering that had all but faded: something and sons, it said.”(8)
“Lingering sweat from the owner’s feet mingled with hers, causing her heart to race; it was the closest things she had ever experienced to the touch of a man.” (8)

“In the evenings she cooks for him, hoping to please, with the rationed, remarkably unblemished sugar, flour, rice, and salt she had written about to her mother in her very first letter home.” (10)

“At night, lying beside her in bed, he listens to her describe the events of her day: her walks along Massachusetts Avenue, the shops she visits, the Hare Krishnas who pester her with their leaflets, the pistachio ice cream cones she treats herself to in Harvard Square.” (10)

A comparison can be drawn in between the available short sentences and long sentences, comparatively, long ones exceeds in number. The reason may be Lahiri’s unconscious acquisition of Indian linguistic behaviour.

4.3.6 Use of Synda ‘And’:

Examples are:

“And so, instead of saying Ashoke’s name, she utters the interrogative that has come to replace it, which translates roughly as “Are you listening to me?” (2)

“And then a man’s voice: “I love you, sweetheart.” (23)

“And then, impulsively, admitting it for the first time: "I'm saying I don't want to raise Gogol alone in this country. It's not right. I want to go back." (20)

“And then the grand finale, the moment they have all been waiting for.” (23)

"And Baba?” (25)
“And then Boston tilts away and they ascend effortlessly over a blackened Atlantic.”

(26)

Use of ‘And’ validate the continuation. It is also a feature of Indian linguistic behaviour. While Americans complete one thing in short and direct sentence, Indian are used to expand things, making it acceptable to the listener. Indianness repeatedly comes forth as a robust feature of Lahiri’s writing. B.F. skinner’s *The Behaviourist Theory* explains that a child learns the linguistic traits from the behaviour of the people around him. Being the child of Indian Parents, Lahiri must have acquired these traits from her family.

4.3.7 Fronting:

Examples from the text are:

“American seconds tick on top of her pulse point.” (4):

“Lingering sweat from the owner’s feet mingled with hers, causing her heart to race; it was the closest thing she had ever experienced to the touch of a man.” (8)

“Seen much of this world?” (15)

“Carefully he turned the soft yellow pages of his book, a few delicately tunnelled by worms.” (17)

“Life within the house continued.” (19)

“Twice daily the maid twisted rags into buckets of water and wiped the floors.” (19)

“This sign of respect in America and Europe, this symbol of heritage and lineage would be ridiculed in India.” (28)
A careful glance over the front items such as ‘American’, ‘Lingering, ‘Careful’, ‘Seen’, ‘Life’, ‘Twice daily’ suggest Lahiri’s own psychological balance between the open American society and constrained Indian Society. Lahiri has been brought up in an environment where she has to be in touch with two languages and double languages mean double culture, so since her childhood, she developed in ambience of two cultures. This is how she has comprehended both the culture and acquired and balanced them in her life.

As the **Optimality theory** proposed by Prince and Smolensky suggests, that observed form of language arise from the interaction between conflicting constraints and ranking of constraints enable the difference in language by providing certain constraints over the others. (Prince 7) Thus, Bengali and English languages are two constraints for Lahiri, where she prefers English over Bengali, as her final language for production of her ideas. Faithfulness is a significant constraint in it. For her, at home, Bengali is a faithful constraint, while for universal approach, English supplies that faithfulness constraint to Lahiri, so she has preferred English over Bengali.

The excessive use of compound words highlights Lahiri’s acquisition of American culture. **Social Interactionist theory** by Vygotsky (1978) states: "Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first, between people (interpsychological) and then inside the child (intrapsychological). This applies equally to voluntary attention, to logical memory, and to the formation of concepts. All the higher functions originate as actual relationships between individuals.". (Culatta 10) Lahiri, also gives place to Hyphenated and compound words, may be under the same reason.

In the light of Semiotics, the title of the text *The Namesake* itself, is symbolic. It stands for emotions, self-respect, and personal identity. Gogol, the central character, keeps
on struggling for his identity throughout the novel. It is a strife of an Indian for knowing his identity. The concept of offering Name to someone is a pious ritual. It is a cultural, traditional, emotional ceremony. Indian’s believe that One’s name decides one’s destiny.

The semantic study of this chapter reveals that in The Namesake Lahiri is about exploring the other world. Her language demonstrates linguistic expression from both the continents. In her second book, Lahiri seems bringing two worlds very close and trying to portray their lives with balance. Lahiri is evolving with her writing style. Nothing dominates her style now. Everything comes with parity. All the practiced devices show her maturity with time. Lahiri concludes the work with a thought that a person can be happy only if he practices his own culture. For e.g. Ashima seeks peace after coming back to India while, Gogol is still trying to find it in another society. As Interpreter of Maladies depicts Lahiri as daughter of an Indian mother and, through The Namesake, Lahiri It seems that she understands the notion, still is not ready to accept it due to cause of Universal Acceptance, where a person does everything to prove that he is suitable to the society where he is dwelling. Lahiri also shows her cords with American culture under the same perspective.