

Indian Journal of Modern Research and Reviews

This Journal is a member of the '*Committee on Publication Ethics*'

Online ISSN:2584-184X

Research Article



Cultural Representations and Social Critique in Indian English Drama: Currimbhoy and Dattani in Perspective

Pragya Verma ^{1*}, Dr. Ram Shankar Yadav ²

¹ Research scholar, Department of English, Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia Awadh University, Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh, India

² Head of Department, Department of English, Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia Awadh University, Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh, India

Corresponding Author: *Pragya Verma

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18268779>

Abstract

This article mainly examines how the two major Indian playwrights in English—Asif Currimbhoy and Mahesh Dattani—deploy the theatrical form to mainly represent the culture and articulate the social critique. Although the two plays focus on the fault-lines of the Indian modernity, the playwrights portray Currimbhoy with the political and transnational crises of the 1960s and 1970s and Dattani with domestic social tragedies of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, although the period of the writing of each of the plays is close to thirty years apart and the historical development of the two nations impacts them differently. The context of their plays is reflected in the paper with the growth of the Indian English theatre, the language, the stage, the creation of characters and the dramatising technique that the issues of classes, caste, gender, sexuality, communalism and nation are mediated. This is achieved through more thorough readings of the sample articles, and that is done by Currimbhoy, Goa, Inqilab, The Do drummers, The Refugee, Dattani, Final Solutions, Dance Like a Man, Tara, Bravely Fought the Queen, On a Muggy Night in Mumbai and Thirty Days in September. It claims that the theatre of immediacy employed by Currimbhoy draws upon documentary energy and political allegory, discovering systematic violence and postcolonial disillusionment as opposed to the city and bourgeois household being the ethical factories that make identities coordinate and reveal prejudice within Currimbhoy. It is summed up that all of them fall within the Indian English drama as the gift of critical publicity; the type of drama that transfers the struggle between different social elements to the sphere of performative argumentation consistently.

Manuscript Information

- **ISSN No:** 2584-184X
- **Received:** 20-11-2025
- **Accepted:** 26-12-2025
- **Published:** 16-01-2026
- **IJCRM:**4(1); 2026: 97-104
- **©2026, All Rights Reserved**
- **Plagiarism Checked:** Yes
- **Peer Review Process:** Yes

How to Cite this Article

Verma P, Yadav R S. Cultural Representations and Social Critique in Indian English Drama: Currimbhoy and Dattani in Perspective. Indian J Mod Res Rev. 2026;4(1):97-104.

Access this Article Online



www.multiarticlesjournal.com

KEYWORDS: Indian English drama; Asif Currimbhoy; Mahesh Dattani; cultural representation; social critique; postcoloniality; gender and sexuality; communalism; dramaturgy; performance studies.

1. INTRODUCTION

India's Indian theatre within the English has often been highly framed as one of the derivative traditions, overshadowed by the actual aesthetic authority of the classical Sanskrit drama and also the political verve of the modern Indian-language theatre. This is not a story to tell and is not a fruitful one. It is an idiom that has been manufactured by English playwrights, and we should date its manufacture to the middle of the previous century, without which would orient the energies of a metropolitan modernist style, the ethics of anti-colonial opposition, and the range and taste of Indian life. Asif Currimbhoy and Mahesh Dattani are in vastly different rungs in this profession (Bhiseet *et al.*, 2021). Currie was born in the 1960s and writes a lot; his writing is defiant of the storm that had been a recently decolonised country. Trying to look inward, Dattani, who grew up in the 1990s but was first born in the late 1980s, targets his gaze at the social microphysics of Indian urbanised middle class that is grappling with discrimination against both religion and gender, as well as sexuality.

Their works are read comparatively today by the modern day Indian English theatre research to trace the lineage of the culture portrayal and commentary in their works in social context. It advances three claims. Originally, Indian English theatre is not an implanted theatrical drama of the British theatre, it is a dialogue kind with the tincture of multi-legalisation of the performance ecology. The second difference is that Currimbhoy and Dattani present very different histories of criticism: the former is any tendency of the production of hot on events to political presentism; the latter, the stratified habitus of the social existence(DATTANI *et al.*, 2021). Third, their dramaturgical decisions i.e. episodic form, the chorric voices, realistic interior, broken time lines is not an incidental tool of style but a social tool of analysis. The article is anchored on juxtaposition of their repertoires to show how the language of the theatre in English could be used as an instrument of re-creating the public sphere in India.

Indian English Drama: Trajectories and Problematics

Indian theatre in English emerges from the colonial contact zones—Calcutta's proscenium stage, Bombay's commercial theatres, as well as the university dramatics clubs. However, it has the process of its formation following independence and up until the establishment of urban population, English schools' audience and transnationalities of publishing and visiting. The issue of language is the most significant problem. The gift bestowed on the playwrights is a dubious gift that extends the English language via the medium that makes their plays available to the cosmopolitan distribution, and the other and consequently, they are less affiliated with the vernacular publics(Hossain *et al.*, 2021). This conflicting is developed in a witty way. The Currimbhoy and Dattani of the English present is no longer the imitation of the British idiom; it is an Indian English through which passes pragmatic borrowing and through which rhythms in shalfada are striking back at Indian language. This language is a dramatizing means of the heteroglossia on the scene: and there is an India of many languages on the scene before us, as a chorus of accents, idioms and silences.

At institutional level, such theatre groups as Theatre Group Bombay, St. Xavier and St. Stephen dramatic society and eventually an English language based company of Bangalore enabled the establishment of an English theatre with a contemporary bias repertoire. The Indian English drama (1960s-1990s) is scaled bigger in the alternation between the periodically satiric to the psychologically and ethically convincing local dramas by nature. The first movement is symbolized in Currimbhoy by his prolific catalogue--which possesses an im-mediacy political. Magnificent domestic, as well as, affective exploration introduced by Dattani leads to the illustration of second (Aqeel *et al.*, 2021). This collective performance will cause an Indian English drama to emerge out of the sphere of entertainment in the drawing-room, as the stage is transformed to an educative stage of a critical pedagogue.

Theoretical Framework: Representation, Critique, and Performance

This article approaches the plays through a huge interdisciplinary frame which is drawing on the postcolonial theory, performance studies, as well as the critical social theory. It then no longer remains a reflection of representation but rather a mediation: the stage transforms the tensions of the social interactions into scenes. Such concept as the performance theory predetermines the effect of the dramaturgical decisions on the audience (the cast, the space composition, the time montage, the direct address) that will or will not meet the social conventions. It is not only about some social critique, but it is content (a message) and form: who is speaking, and who is being silenced, how power is being enacted, where is the audience situated.

This is analysed on three concepts. The latter is aptly called theatre of immediacy and may be applied to the case of Currimbhoy, whereby there is a congruity between the temporality of the play and the dynamics of the news cycle and the fact that the documentary is blended into fiction (Patil *et al.*, 2021). The second one is the so called theatre of proximity that can be utilized on Dattani when the mise-end-scene triggers the collapse of the collisions of the population into domestic space and consequently the impulses of the ethical issues on a small scale. The third one is the one and is known as the translational realism under which English within it, comprises other linguistic worlds, and this gives it an indexical texture which informs us as to the social position of characters, their education and their ideological identifications. These ideas enable the perception of the plays as the cultural laboratories as opposed to the story.

Asif Currimbhoy's Theatre of Immediacy Historical Context and Aesthetic Orientation

Asif Currimbhoy (1934–1994) writes in a proper era which was defined by postcolonial optimism tempered by repeated crises: wars, famines, communal riots, and the uneven promise of developmentHis plays are thick and opportune and they are commonly inspired by the happenings of the headlines and international geopolitics. He borrows proscenium, tries chorric and film montage(Singla *et al.*, 2021). It is a pleading tone,

acute words, sub-ironic allegories. It is irony, dripped by the dramaturgical activity of Currimbhoy, that both the dream of liberation and the dream of secularism are threatened by the power of the despots, both the dream of secularism and of the neighbours are threatened by the tribalism and both the cosmopolitan dream is being gnashed at by the realpolitik.

Political Allegory and Cultural Portraiture in “Goa”

“Goa” dramatizes the political annexation of the Portuguese enclave by India in 1961. Instead of describing the event as a one-dimensional triumph of nationalism, Currimbhoy develops a portrait of the Goan society, which included Catholic elites, who first of all had to balance between the legacy of colonialism and the nationalism, Hindu communities, which had to balance between moral and pragmatic considerations (Liu *et al.*, 2021). The opposition between bureaucracy and language versus church and slang is alternated by the timeliness and energy to blend and cause a soundscape of veracity opposition. The heroic drama of battlefield is not what causes the drama to be dramatic, but is the fact of choice between or without morality: What is the price of freedom? Who narrates liberation? Currimbhoy will not be pleased with sentimental closure, and the question of ambivalence is also open. This is what his representation of culture is the ambivalence, the community is an uncredible, yet a negotiation practice at stake with the state.

“Inqilab”: Revolutionary Desire and the Crisis of Ideology

“Inqilab” stages the romance and also the disillusionment of the revolutionary politics. In this case, when bad Currimbhoy arrives at ideology is like theatre: slogans to incantations are made; protest march is turned into a series of actions, and a police crackdown is made a counter-spectacle. Characters are never psychological categories but ideological poses with hegemony issues. However, the strength of the play is that the ideological fanaticism becomes human: what money families donate, what virginity is tempted, what price is the institutional politics has to pay. The cultural image is demonstrated in the form of the infamous program of nation-making and the social discourse is developed in the exposition of not only the state violence but the revolutionary chauvinism.

The Urban Psyche in “The Doldrummers” and the Ethics of Disenchantment

The Doldrummers converts to sheer politics to existential despair of the urban aristocrats. Currimbhoy, in this work, envisioned the vagrant life of the late-moderns: the characters speak fluent English, and they do not express their ideas, are dynamic, but not tutored. Transforming the modern city into a maze of tabled desires, performing is contrary to reality with a focus on tonal differences, surreal interludes, which contributes to the overall sense of the city as a mirror(Ramzan *et al.*, 2021). It is a significantly more indirect and no less cutting social reproach; consumer modernity is intended to bring a feeling of liberation even though it is also bringing on inertia; the cosmopolitan subjectivity is sheathing itself with unchallenged privilege. It is ambivalent culture, hence, in the portraiture of

Currimbhoy, because it does not negate the aspirational modernity, but what it reveals is its emptiness.

Borders and Displacement in “The Refugee”

It is the contest of the stage onto the fringes of the nation-state of the Refugee reenactments which is based on the violated subject in an accidental and uneasy othering in the law. The reliant of precarity on low-density landscape and near-ritual movement defines Currimbhoy. Since the voice of the refugee is bound to be broken by the government, the soldiers, the well-intended social workers, it is upon this that he becomes a dramaturgical artist of silence. It is also the intermission that constitutes the moral hub of the play. In this case there is deliberate naked cultural presentation by the body of the refugee, which reflects the disintegration of the grand narratives. The one of bureaucratic inhumanity and the scenery of humanitarianism which implies alternation of pity and control, both of them are subjects of criticism.

Currimbhoy’s Language and Performance Style

The Currimbhoy English is assertive, syllogistic and even antagonistic. He chooses Indianisms to exile colonial prestige and does so in a tactical way, as he does show social location. A level of rhetoric element can be found in stage directions, which forces directors towards stylization of the action, as well as the collage of the changing of scenes. The impact of it is to provide a back-and-forth area instead of simulated life(Bhise *et al.*, 2021). The audience becomes a part of a jury, digests facts, ironies and contradictions. In his interpretation of culture, plays, then, perform the culture of the commons in the drama; the principle of social commentary is not of the drama as a by-product but is, instead, a working mechanism of the drama.

Mahesh Dattani’s Theatre of Proximity

Context and Aesthetic Orientation

Mahesh Dattani (born 1958) is an artist that has not served long enough at the time when the Indian urban life started to be liberalized, being churned and media-scattered. His plays are no longer policy abstractions of families and their mini economies of power. The dramaturgy, this formal clearness of the action, wording verbatim, this selective ordering of space, and that characteristic scrupulous ethical interest are that brilliant quality of Dattani(Derakhshan *et al.*, 2021). He implements the middle class house as the protective/constraining space within this space, all the insecurities of gender, caste, sexuality and religion of the country are re-creating, re-enforcing. The English is airy and spoken and contemporary and is commonly mixed with the Indian languages to achieve an effect and a mark.

Communal Memory and the Staging of Prejudice in “Final Solutions”

Final Solutions has its theme based on communal tension and this is achieved by researching the family of the small town that was shaken by the images of the bloodshed Partition. Dattani is innovative in the novelty of chorus of Hindu and Muslim crowd, the figurative meaning of group identity being the target of the procession of fear and rumour. The design of the set of

the play is designed as a metaphor of porousness of the public and the private when the design is in the form of a house whose thresholds are porous. When it comes to the cultural image as such that is reflected here, it is not a unitary tableau of two solitary groups that is so much younger and more monolithic, but an intergenerational memory, rumour network and ethics of hospitality which is pre-empted by Dattani. Social critique is expressed in the form of revelation of the mode of insecurity production, dissemination, and change of the ordinary people into a crowd.

Gender, Ambition, and Artistic Identity in “Dance Like a Man”

The film *Dance Like a Man* is made up of the ageing couple of the workers of the Bharatanatyam and a daughter and the bonehead of the contradiction of art and the processes of survival, tradition and modernity, tenderization of the image. The male dancer is not just struggling with a professional but also with an ontological level his manhood is subjected to social rules that define dance as a feminine art(Nath *et al.*, 2021). Utilising role and time duplication in demonstrating the collusion of ambition and patriarchy in minimising agency of women and ensuring the stigmatisation of male vulnerability, Dattani uses the time- across-time effect both upon herself and in considering the male vulnerability and sensitivity in an attempt to command the world. The culture is manifested in a variety of forms: the world of classical dances is not ideal and accepted, it is the institution where there are the people of admissions and the people of non-admissions. The commentary on the social aspects is not done in a format of caricature, nonetheless, it is in a manner that dismantles the microaggressions which plague artistic careers.

Disability, Gendered Preference, and Biomedical Modernity in “Tara”

Tara is a product of a middle-class family and an astute slice of the patriarchy that favours the twins, who form a conjoined Ness, by separating them through surgery, that the boy should get more opportunities to survive in life and the girl no chances to claim any medical and social worth(Bhabha *et al.*, 2021). The use of non-linear recollection allows Dattani to construct the play since the adult male twin is the narrator thus, the aspect of complicity is constructed when making the confession. The language used in the clinical practice is so doctors that it borders on family euphemisms, which form a cool talk of care which could not be torn to pieces and cannot be controlled. The cultural representation of intersection of gender, disability and class is explored, the collusion between science and normative hierarchies is responded to by social critique.

Domestic Patriarchy and the Theatre of Masks in “Bravely Fought the Queen”

This is evidenced in *Bravely Fought the Queen* in which the authors portray the affluent family in which respectability conceals brutality, dishonesty, and stifling passion. It makes use of split scenes and masks, literal and figurative to explain the way roles are initiated within the family. The cultural performance exhibited by Dattani is that the urban modernity is

repertoire of act the ideal hostess, good wife, good businessman. This social commentary is against respectfully politics as well as the corporate patriarchy between women and queer men that makes them disposable. The titular characterisation of a folk heroine supports the sarcasm of the courage in the world of women who need to submit within themselves.

Queer Visibility and the City in “On a Muggy Night in Mumbai”

The *On a Muggy night in Mumbai*, being one of the first openly queer plays of one of the most familiar plays written in Indian English, has its desire in the cliche of walls in an apartment. The external environment exists in the form of a wet weather, traffic sounds and a threat of detection (Hossain *et al.*, 2021). This cultural stereotype presented by Dattani is not common, the gays characters are not merely dynamic, but also obscure and intertwined with the family compulsion. There is the dramaturgically prerogative voice capture, which is the source of the social critique to voice, to hinder and show to voice, to act, and, lastly, to speak. The closet occurs not just as secrecy but literally as labour the labour of keeping up of heteronormative multiplicity selves.

Trauma, Memory, and the Ethics of Care in “Thirty Days in September”

One of the aspects of the play *30 Days in September* that touches on the theme is the family child sexual abuse and the impacts of the therapy. It is marked with the arrangement of time, which tortures psychological routine of traumatized people. The suppressiveness of the play is what provides the play with its ethical effect, without melodrama, just the tedious performance of the memory, shame and recovery(Spivak *et al.*, 2021). This one is two sided on the part of the stakeholder and cultural representation: it displays culture of silence, culture of complicity as well as the strategies of new therapeutic practices or support network being developed. Social critique could be defined as the violation of a taboo with the help of a performative articulation, and this is what causes spectators of the spectacle give out their call to the spectacle as a type of ethical practice.

Comparative Perspectives: Form, Space, and the Spectator Political Presentism and Ethical Proximity

Currimbhoy and Dattani are interested in social critique and are different in the dramaturgical position. The politics of presentism is Currimbhoy, which has the reference forms, acts of the governments; it succeeds in making its spectator an accomplice of the act: fighter, witness. Dattani inserts politics in the stage of moral intimacy of the viewer as the confidant/interlocutor. In this instance, the connotation is that Indian drama written in English is segmented into macro-historical report having a micro-social diagnostics without abandoning the political. Instead, the critic line is displaced out of the street and into the living room, out of the dramatic tragedies of the nation and in to the banal playing which makes inequality no longer controversial.

Language as Social Index

Both of the plays feature an indexical socially regime (the Indian English). The conversation of Currimbhoy is probationary, usually redundant to make the few chimes of thought succinct and acute; his, as that of Dattani, is of conversation to the perirenal lingo of the city nowadays. Code switching is a replacement of social location: a Hindi, Gujarati, or Kannada word or sentence, a linguistic explosion in the middle of the English, is a signifier of intimacy, anger, or power shift(Keles *et al.*, 2021). Even the sound performance of the multilingual audio may be understood as the reflection of the culture as people can hear the strata of the Indian society. It is driven by reproach as well: when a bureaucrat sleeps-in to inform the authority, or when a loved one switches to a native language to say or heal, language structures of the play are made social.

Space: Borders and Interiors

Currimbhoy is often found to exist within occupied and geographically marked geopolitical space and resides amongst refugees, demonstrating spaces, suppositions and non-suppositions of the law. The scenery background of the whereabouts where Dattani works is the living room, the rehearsal room, the bedroom through which the law of the family, gender and respectability was being acted out, with ruthless intimacy. These spatial rhetorics have various effects to spectators. Currimbhoy urges the viewers to look out to the crisis in the public and Dattani urges the employees to look in to the crisis in the private. They do cross the line, though, both of them Currimbhoy takes the refugee to the auditorium; Dattani allows the mob chanting to creep into the house(Adilazuarda *et al.*, 2021). The process of cultural representation, in both incidences, is done through taking the imposition of the encounters that might not have happened in the daily life.

Time: Event and Duration

The effort in Currimbhoy plan is planned on the lines of events - annexation, insurrection, displacement. It is also adrenaline rush and the scenery has been put in a manner that creates tension. Predictivity of time systems in Dattani: Time re-traumas, reiterations of memories, reiteration of rehearsals, reiteration of discussions. This is the resistance of their social criticisms that Currimbhoy is encouraging the audience to doubt the conditions which both bring about cataclysm; it is the devolutionary violence of the social code which both Dattani is encouraging the audience to question. These two methods of time-use in turn are political, but to two opposite tables of reform policy versus Pedagogy, Agitation versus Introspection.

Allegory and Realism

Currimbhoy is the allegoric characterizations, on the basis of emblematic characterization simplifying the complex politics. His opponents find didacticism sometimes in him, but allegory in his drama is compressed art, it revolves him round the ladder, and down the ladder. Dattani is drawn in by the realism of characterization and mental nuances; even with this, as the

choruses or masks never appear as part of the content of the living experience(Hansen *et al.*, 2021). Though, in case the acquittal of Currimbhoy is dialectical that is to contrast what is argued on either side, that of Dattani is diagnostic and is likely to announce some pathologies under normalcy. Indian English drama is expanded by their joint contribution, and it shows that not only the argumentation but also the sympathy permits one to carry out the social criticism.

Cultural Representation: Ethics, Stereotypes, and Complexity

One of the themes that have been constantly raised in the Indian English drama is the threat of stereotyping in the area of communities, gender, and minorities. This is the risk that Dattani and Currimbhoy deal with differently. Currimbhoy comes close to the act, and there are instances where he is tempted to typify, but on the one hand he is also provided with compensations of counter-voices, ironic narration. It may be argued that Dattani is the resistance against the principles of stereotyping because of the rejection of the easy truths about morality; even the subjects are provided the social environment, but this is the denying environment not justifying one(Bolt *et al.*, 2021). The two cases offer ethics of representation, which imply permitting characters in conversation and overpower to be caught off guard. The plays, in their turn, are a remedy to the media caricature, in offering the ideas of a sense of alterity, which is slowed down.

We possess the portrayal of religion that is meaningful. In Currimbhoy, the dramas, the secular vengeance of the postcolonial policies and religious faith to the political rhetoric mobilization are responded to. Dattani makes religion a mode of existence, rituals, home deities and group in which can help as a safe haven, and also as suffocate. The predicament of either consists in the dramatizing of faith without making it clichés, and of communalism without rupturing affections of believers. Their effort refers to the fact that their multiple truth of aspiration and injury will be deemed the least distant to the blame (cultural representation) when it is made to happen.

The Social Life of Performance: Reception, Production, and Translation

The homosexuality of the play is criticized without restraint, which is socially, as the text, not limited to itself, but to choices the production might make, to the audience, and circulation. Urban Currimbhoy could be frequently aimed at the Anglophone upper classes and message and effectiveness are concerns: is it preaching to the privileged? But even the motion of elite cooperation in his plays had already become visible that one could encounter it so hard to disregard even in towns(Smith *et al.*, 2021). The plays of Dattani composed with the assistance of professional companies and translated into the film and television variants were the extension of the English-language theatre in India. It turned out to be in Bangalore, Mumbai and Deliberations in college circuit and international festivals which led to the creation of interpretive communities that deliberated on the taboo topics within the semi-public spaces.

Reception is also complex when it comes to translation and adaptation. The two writers have staged some of their plays in the Indian languages or localized them on the basis of the audience. This kind of translations threatens cross-cultural mobility of the social criticism among the linguistic publics. In very few cases, the ethical nature is eradicated; the code-switching and even culture-specific jokes are employed. The very fact that the plays were translated into other languages means that they have been subject of criticism on the basis of structural issues that do not necessarily pertain to the English language in any manner.

Methodological Interlude: Reading Drama as Social Theory

When aesthetic density of these plays becomes exposed with the spectacles of social critique is flattened. To prevent the latter, the scenes and devices portrayed in the article are presented as argumentative in and of themselves. This outburst of choral in Final Solutions is not this easy flower of theatricality that is being suggested; but a theory of the psychology of the crowd, of the minds of crowds. Gendered biopolitics is one of the theories used in the tale Taras of operation(Núñez *et al.*, 2021). The Refugee theorize Language of bureaucracy that controls bare life is termed the Interruptive silences. This desirability of environmental consumer in the conceptuality of laziness of The Doldrums takes consumer desirability as a process of delay. The fact that this kind of formal arguments is discovered makes us grateful to the potential of the theatre to create social knowledge as compared to what can be depicted.

Case Studies: Close Readings

Hospitality and Hostility in “Final Solutions”

One of such turning points is the case when the Hindu family adopts two Muslim boys and saves them in the riot among others. The door leading to the room is often hinged and closed and opened. Any loophole is an ethical hazard; any thwarting a withdrawal of hazard. The small gestures are translated by Dattani into a syntax of baking and passing the water during insomnia, towel giving, exchange of looks etc. This expression becomes acoustically adopted by the offstage chorus who's at some point knocking up the set takes the place of the expression which the community wants to be made intimate to what the home is leaking in terms of its noisiness(Bhat *et al.*, 2021). It is a micro-phenomenological representation cultural minority: hospitality is not an ideal being but a collection of marked exhibitions of unhappiness. Into the exposure the social eye-role plays: - we watch how as little the morals are waded, and how the conscience is haunted by Time-papers rumour.

The Politics of Gaze in “Dance Like a Man”

The appearance of the multiple figures of the male performer takes place in one of the rehearsal scenes: on the severe master guru, the suspicious father-in-law, the sponsor compromiser and the companion of devotion and rivalry. Dattani is also playing with lights, such that to separate his body into the fragments of analysis. The stage has been turned into a studio of patriarchal and patronage economies whereby art is not pure but

intermedial. The cultural expression is worthwhile to the ecosystem of classical dance with its caste and lineage stratifications; of the social commentary of how perfection is developed at the cost of conformity. It is no especially easy-going to the decadent life of the artistic freedom and the artistic proliferation in general that the very institutions which safeguard art should know how to suffocate the opposition and even the deviation.

Voice and Voicelessness in “The Refugee”

The main character of the Refugee becomes lost almost immediately at the start of the narrative when he is willing to share the story of his life with one of the officials but gets stuck in the formalities: name, country of origin, paperwork. These discontinuities also constitute syntax of fragmentation; it is a bureau-pathing dislocation of life of the refugee(Pastitsioet *al.*, 2021). Currimbhoy is attracted as the centre where the lyrical memory of the character receives a chance to emerge who presents the images of homemaking and loss, however, this is abruptly interrupted. It is, so to speak, not only emotionally moving, but theorizes how the state turns biography into file. The culture representation will not have its way with sentimentality in this scenario since it makes alive the violence of paper work. Such systems where systems consider legibility more than justice are the subject of social commentary against these systems.

The Script of Silence in “Tara”

During one of the final clashes that the mother tells him that she was operated on but it is half broken in a very systematic way. Dattani constructs his conversation using ellipses and half sentences and is synonymous to action pauses. The unsaid becomes audible. This is a silent tactic of cultural representation: a high-middle-class manners allow not saying what one is guilty of, of what is more, a maternal guilt so that the truth will sound in a staccato. It is the reproach that executes melodrama which makes the language of care of the everyday so devastating; it comes to realize, that there is hierarchy in the language of care. This scene transforms so much into the living room of the family into the court without the judge: spectators create the court.

Ethical Aesthetics: Responsibility and Risk

A danger of writing social critique in social art theatre: art to message. Currimbhoy occasionally takes this risk, and then his best work will transform high vitality of the day into eternal question of the morality. On his part, Dattani walks on the very narrow edge of the advocacy versus ambiguity with the manner in which he offers the audiences the freedom to occupy the self-competing grounds(Hall *et al.*, 2021). The two take the blame, and dignify their personalities by words and make forms that do not preclude a discussion. All attempts of this kind that they offer the spectator in their plays are not an invitation to the spectator to nourish on censure, but on censure as a dialogue in their own social Universe.

It also brings about the question of morality of what is wrong or right in as far as the representation of trauma and marginality in

the plays is concerned. The consent and agency is safeguarded by bartering the survivor witnessing within 30 days in September. Instead, it does not exoticize the queer desire but places it within the context of banal sounds in the city as opposed to transgression itself in *On a Muggy Night in Mumbai*. In denying its melodramatic presentation The Refugee triggers up the pornographies of suffering, but is a structurally indignant literature form. This type of aesthetics ethics form a pedagogy of the spectators and they help in teaching the audiences on the art of listening and questioning.

Limitations and Counterpoints

There are few things that could have been said about India English drama that would fill it out. The corpus of Currimbhoy is disproportional; given that a few of his plays are the rush job of a writer, they have lacked the structure growth of their better form(Gutches *et al.*, 2021). Dattani is obsessed with urban middle-class space, and this can be at risk of not denoting the life of rural and working classes, yet his plays are more prone to demonstrate what a middle-class is engaged in greater processes of oppression. Besides, English, as it is, with its higher usability, is also an elite language, which might never penetrate the communities that are expected to be the most impacted by the problems identified. Through the corrective influences: translations, community theatre, and cross-linguistic work, these limitations are brought down and the field of discourse is extended.

CONCLUSION

The paper has suggested that Asif Currimbhoy and Mahesh Dattani who work in different eras but reveal different aesthetic orientation to the same project is redressing the Indian English stage to critical public domain whereby culture is represented and social commentary is mutually constitutive of one another. The crises in the country are transformed into intelligibility as moral and political dilemmas through the theatre of immediacy in Currimbhoy and micro-analyses the libraries of prejudice and care that are intimate through the theatre of proximity in Dattani. Both of them are translingual speakers of English because they need to refer to plural India no longer a colonial project. They can thus take on an intellectual play that is otherwise anticipated of the social theory: They determine structural power, model the ethical reasoning, and provoke the practical imagination.

The Indian English play, which was actually branded as social disengagement plays by both Currimbhoy and Dattani, removes the drawback. These disclose that a play may be not only agreeable but also critical, sentimental and prosaic. Although in classes, halls and living rooms, these works still remind a fresh national, community, family, and self-discussion. Indian English theatre is already aligned with the new media, hybridity's and digital mediation of publics but it is imperative not to change the fact that we have to listen across the difference, argue without dehumanizing and repeat the business of democracy incompleteness.

REFERENCES

1. Bhabha HK. Postcolonial criticism. In: *Portcullis*. London: Routledge; 2023. p. 105–133.
2. Bhat RM, Syllable A, Kandasamy LS. Revolutionary trends in Indian history: ideological diversity and collective resistance. *J Soc Sci (JOSS)*. 2023;2(8):750–758.
3. Bhise S, Bhise R. A study of socio-political, cultural, and psychological realism in Indian English drama. 2024.
4. Bolt D, editor. *Metanarratives of disability: Culture, assumed authority, and the normative social order*. London: Routledge; 2021.
5. Dattani TM. The evolution of Indian English drama: from Rabindranath Tagore. 2024.
6. Derakhshan A. Should textbook images be merely decorative? Cultural representations in the Iranian EFL national textbook from the semiotic approach perspective. *Lang Teach Res*. 2024;28(1):79–113.
7. Dilaurate MF, Mukherjee S, Lavania P, Singh S, Aji AF, O'Neill J, et al. Towards measuring and modelling culture in LLMs: a survey. *arXiv preprint*. 2024;arXiv:2403.15412.
8. Fandiño-Parra YJ. Decolonizing English language teaching in Colombia: epistemological perspectives and discursive alternatives. *Colomb Appl Linguist J*. 2021;23(2):166–181.
9. Gutches A, Rajaram S. Consideration of culture in cognition: how we can enrich methodology and theory. *Psychon Bull Rev*. 2023;30(3):914–931.
10. Hall S, Evans J, Nixon S. *Representation: cultural representations and signifying practices*. London: Routledge; 2024.
11. Hansen K. *Grounds for play: the nautanki theatre of North India*. Berkeley (CA): University of California Press; 2023.
12. Hossain A, Qadir W. Exploring the tapestry of socio-cultural dynamics: a review of Mahesh Dattani's plays and his contribution to Indian English playwriting.
13. Hossain KI. Reviewing the role of culture in English language learning: challenges and opportunities for educators. *Soc Sci Humanit Open*. 2024;9:100781.
14. Kapoor V, Belk R, Goulding C. Ritual revision during a crisis: the case of Indian religious rituals during the COVID-19 pandemic. *J Public Policy Mark*. 2022;41(3):277–297.
15. Keles U, Yazan B. Representation of cultures and communities in a global ELT textbook: a diachronic content analysis. *Lang Teach Res*. 2023;27(5):1325–1346.
16. Liu Y, Zhang LJ, May S. Dominance of Anglo-American cultural representations in university English textbooks in China: a corpus linguistics analysis. *Lang Cult Curric*. 2022;35(1):83–101.
17. Nath S. A critical assessment of Indian English plays: a bird's eye view. *Peer Rev J Arts Humanit*. p. 143.
18. Núñez Pardo A. Indelible coloniality and emergent decoloniality in Colombian-authored EFL textbooks: a critical content analysis. *Kiala Rev Lang Cult*. 2022;27(3):702–724.
19. Pastitsio D, Widodo HP, Widyaningrum L, Altamaha A, Lestari Yana RPD. How do primary school English

textbooks teach moral values? A critical discourse analysis. *Stud Educ Eval.* 2021;70:101044.

- 20. Patil K. Television soap operas and social change in India: representations of gender, class, and morality. *J Res Soc Sci Humanit.* 2024;3(2):7–13.
- 21. Ramzan M, Khan MA, Sarwar M. Style shift: a comparative cultural analysis of *Pride and Prejudice* and *Unmarriageable*. *Univ Chitral J Linguist Lit.* 2023;7(II):22–29.
- 22. Singla P. The importance of ethnic portrayal in Indian writing in English in the modern context.
- 23. Smith I. *Black Shakespeare: Reading and misreading race*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; 2022.
- 24. Spivak GC. Poststructuralism, marginality, postcoloniality and value. In: *Portcullis*. London: Routledge; 2023. p. 57–84.
- 25. Xiang R, Yenika-Agbaw V. EFL textbooks, culture and power: a critical content analysis of EFL textbooks for ethnic Mongols in China. *J Multiling Multicult Dev.* 2021;42(4):327–341.

Creative Commons License

This article is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0) License. This license permits users to copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format for non-commercial purposes only, provided that appropriate credit is given to the original author(s) and the source. No modifications, adaptations, or derivative works are permitted.

About the corresponding author

Pragya Verma is a Research Scholar in the Department of English at Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia Awadh University, Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh, India. Her academic interests include Indian English literature, postcolonial studies, and cultural criticism. She is actively engaged in scholarly research and academic writing within contemporary literary studies.