

DEFY STEREOTYPES

A Study of the film English Vinglish and the character sketch of Shashi Godbole, who defies all stereotypes to go ahead and make an identity of herself.

Aaquib Shehbaaz Usmani

Dr S.K.Bhogal

Assisstant Professor

Registrar

Delhi School of Journalism

Dean, Faculty of Arts and Humanities

Delhi University

Shri Ventakeshwara University

New Delhi, India

Gajraula, U.P. India

Abstract

English Vinglish (2012) shows how Sridevi, with her firm belief, smashes stereotypes. As a woman-centric movie, it depicts the story of a hardworking mother, a supportive partner who is overburdened, disregarded, overshadowed, ostracized and taken for granted and how this woman faces all the hardships, evolves and finds her dignity and attains a new perspective of life. The story of the movie twirls around a few prominent themes like male chauvinism, women's concerns, predisposed patriarchy, sexism, the critical community and self-worth. And some other themes like equality and human rights, parenting and generation gap and ethnicity. A miscellany of all the issues a woman has to go through.

Introduction

Women in the past have always been mistreated as India is a patriarchal society. As part of a deep-seated practice, males are regarded as breadwinners of the family. So, if a man is ill-treating a woman, she is supposed to condone all that toxic behavior because, in the end, she is dependent on them. Changes can be observed after the rise in feminism. The rise in feminism gave a voice to the novelist moviemakers and even to the common masses to expose and reveal obstacles that a woman has to face on a day-to-day basis.

Gauri Shinde exquisitely portrayed the genuine and simple problems in life as a housewife, in her movie *English Vinglish* (2012). Shashi Godbole (Sridevi)the protagonist is an ordinary woman who does not know English gets married to a well-educated man.

Shashi and Satish must be of the same age group yet they have a discrepancy in their educational status. Shashi went to a Hindi medium school. The way Satish converses in English fluently depicts that he went to an English medium school. It raises another sexist point. Traditionally education was meant for males. Females did not have the right to get educated and were supposed to learn household work. But with evolution came educational activists who tries to get shed of the social patterns and common norms. But even after much revolutionary act, people still have this mindset that it is pointless to educate a girl. Because the final destination of an Indian female is considered as marriage and her parents do not have that much money to invest in her education and marriage.

Plot

The story begins with a family of five: Shashi, her husband Satish, her children Sapna and Sagar and her mother-in-law. Shashi is the backbone of her family. She does everything for her family selflessly. She wakes up before everyone, makes tea for herself and does not get a chance to have it in one sitting. She represents the image of an average Indian woman who is competent and aware of her responsibilities, working wholeheartedly to please everyone. On the contrary, Satish and her daughter Sapna does not reciprocate. They never fail a chance to belittle her. Whenever Shashi mispronounces a word in English, her husband and her daughter always makes fun of her and mocks her. Satish is also embarrassed by her *laddo* making business and even asks her to stop doing that. Sapna is ashamed because she does not know English. Sapna never fails to humiliate her mother. She did not want Shashi to go to her parents-teacher meet and gets embarrassed when Shashi asked her teacher to speak in Hindi with her. Shashi bears all their toxic behavior.

The story sets its base when Satish gets a call from Shashi's sister Manu, from America. And she invites them to her daughter's wedding ceremony. Shashi was supposed to go there before everyone else for a month to help her sister as she is a widow and had no one except Shashi in the name of family. Since Shashi is a very responsible woman, she gets worried about how her family is going to manage everything on their own. Her worries are beautifully expressed by the song "*Dhak Dhuk*" by Amit Trivedi. it starts as

"Piya bin dil lage na ek pal ko man ma lage thes

Kaise jaaun main paraye des

Piya mora nithura

Piya na samjhe man ka ye sandes

Kaise jaaun main paraye des"

The tune of this song is calming. On the contrary, lyrics show a chaotic state. Shashi's heart lies within her family and she considers all her tasks as her duties. This is how females are brought up in Indian society. Men are given higher ranks and regarded as God (*Pati Parmeshwar*) by his wife. Not only men but women are equally blamed for this custom, I know it sounds strange but the thing is that women are also equally responsible. Some women suffered their whole life. They were dominated by men but then also they teach their daughter to serve men or want their daughter in law to follow traditions and suffer again. But in reality, it should be equal. All human beings are created equal and should have the right to develop and make necessary settlements and take actions without any limitations or constraints set by customs. It is paradoxical but accurate. Mothers love their son and brought them up like kings and this mentality evokes discrimination. Luckily with Shashi, this was not the case. Even though sexism is a prominent theme but her mother-in-law is very supportive and cares about her a lot, and she even convinced Shashi that she should go to America. That's how very dubiously Shashi makes up her mind to go to America.

Before going to the airport, Satish taught her the answer to all the possible questions asked at the airport in America and even gave her a paper with all the answers written on it. In the aeroplane, an Indian man (Amitabh Bachchan) sits next to her. He notices that it is her first time travelling alone and that too on a plane. He also sees that she is thirsty and so he helped her with that and teaches how to call an air hostess and ask her for help. This scene is a fine example of how Indians are known for their generosity and hospitality. As she reaches New York, there at the airport, the check-out process begins. So, the man asks Shashi her purpose of visiting New York and she gets anxious and starts fumbling and speaks in tear-filled gibberish. The man did not understand so Shashi gave her that piece of paper. That man who sat beside Shashi saw everything and gave Shashi a bit of advice. He said that one should live every moment to the fullest instead of getting bothered about things that are not even under his control.

Shashi's sister Manu, and niece Radha comes to pick her up from the airport. Shashi gets so happy, then goes to her sister's place. Manu talks about how supportive her husband was. Shashi instantly changes her expression. She is thinking about her partner and how unsupportive her husband is. Conjugality is managed by equal efforts. Both of them have their ideas and unparalleled viewpoints on life, so they should respect each other's opinion and appreciate them. Appreciation plays a vital role in a relationship.

The next day, Manu and Radha take Shashi for a Manhattan tour, Shashi enjoys it but was also concerned about her family and how they are managing everything without her. She calls Satish and asks him to come early. It shows how much she cares about her family. The next day Shashi goes out with Radha. Radha asks Shashi to roam in the park as she will get free in two hours. Shashi was fine with it, she goes to Washington Square Park and gets amazed by the people there and their culture. The upcoming scene serves as a turning point in the life of Shashi. She goes to a coffee shop, Barista and the man there was very rude. Language and lack of confidence served as a barrier, Shashi gets very anxious and her hands started shaking. She ordered a cup of coffee. At the time of payment, she started rummaging in her purse and drops a few cents on the ground and counter. It made the situation worse. With no idea what to do, she moves backwards furiously. A waiter tripped over her and breaks coffee mugs and plates. Shashi gets triggered and runs away. She sits on a bench with tear-filled eyes. She was experiencing a miscellany of emotions. Someone pats her shoulder. She turns around and sees a tall French man with a cup of coffee. He does not know English. With a few words in English, he conveys his message that the Barista man was very rude and gives her a cup of coffee. Shashi says thank you and he leaves. As she sees Radha-who was standing on the other side of the road-she wipes off her tears. Radha crossed the road and meets Shashi; she sees an advertisement on a bus. It says,

"Learn to speak English in four weeks."

That advertisement sounded questionable to Radha but on the other hand, it arouses Shashi's interest. Shashi memorizes their contact information and starts taking English classes without telling anyone about it.

Shashi goes for her first English class. It is a batch of seven people.

Eva (Ruth Aguilar)-a Mexican nanny

Salman Khan (Sumeet Vyas)-a Pakistani man who is a cab driver in New York

Ramamurthy (Rajeev Ravindranathan)-an Indian who works in a company in New York

Udumbke (Damian Thompson)-a strange guy who is not very social

Yu Son (Maria Romano)- a sweet girl who is a barber in New York

Laurent (Mehdi Nebbou) a French man who is a chef in New York

and their teacher- Sir David. Everyone comes from a different background and ethnicity, which shows diversification. The ambience of the class was pure. It is Shashi's first day and everyone was introducing themselves. Shashi notices a man. Spontaneously a thought comes to her mind. Laurent was the man who patted her shoulder and gave her a cup of coffee. She passes him a smile, he reciprocated and the class proceeded. David Sir started talking about professions. He asked Shashi what she did. She told him about her Laddo-making business. It fascinated him and he calls her an entrepreneur. Since that term was alien to everyone in the class, David Sir explains it. Shashi gets overwhelmed and starts practicing that word again and again. She goes back home and calls

Satish and tells her that people call her entrepreneur there, Satish makes fun of the way she pronounced entrepreneur and Shashi gets embarrassed.

After a few days, David sir started teaching vowels. As he commands to elaborate his point, Shashi asks a question, "Why is it so that 'the' is used before U.S.A. but not before India?" her question and concern is genuine. The reason is India is a proper noun and United States are not. David sir got impressed by Shashi and saved it for some other day. Shashi cooks' Indian food for her classmates and they all had fun.

One day when Shashi's class gets over, Laurent asks her for a cup of coffee. She denies it but agrees to go for a walk to the train station with him. On their way, Laurent compliments her on her food. Shashi did not accept his compliment and in return, she says that Laurent is a culinarian whereas she is just an ordinary cook. Laurent tries to prove her point wrong by saying that cooking is an art. "If a man cooks, it's an art but if a woman cooks it's her duty", Shashi replied. It is a satire on Indian society. Women are considered as reliable and more natural caregivers but a relationship is based on equal efforts. If the man is earning and bearing all the expenses the woman can manage a household, which includes making meals. On the other hand, if both the husband and wife are working and strengthening the family (even if it is a small business), then the husband should also prepare meals for the family and manage other household tasks.

Shashi and Laurent reached the subway. Laurent goes to get a ticket for himself and asks Shashi if she needs one, she denies his offer by showing him her card (like a metro card; for the fare). The way Laurent was looking at Shashi while getting the ticket seemed peculiar. It felt like he was admiring her elegance like a piece of art. They both get into the train talking and chit-chatting and then separate their ways after a few stations. Shashi reaches home, she relaxes for some time. Radha comes from behind her and asks her about the guy she was walking with. Shashi gets frightened. With fumbling hands and with tears filled eyes, she tells her everything. Shashi got so scared because a thought must have popped up on her mind that how unsupportive and critical her husband and daughter are, regarding everything. Therefore, she thought that Radha will also not support her. On the contrary, Radha screams of joy. She gets so happy and overwhelmed for her aunt and appreciates her for this initiative. The next day Radha goes with Shashi to her English classes to meet Shashi's classmates. Shashi introduces her to everyone. Since their teacher was absent, Radha suggests them to go and watch a movie. Everyone liked the idea and responded positively. Radha did not join them because she had to go and attend her classes. Shashi watched the movie with full concentration and Laurent's eyes were on her, it was visible how dazzled he is, looking at her. That charm in his eyes was evident. It felt like some foreign thoughts were popping up in his mind.

After the movie, Shashi gets a call from Sapna. She was furious and started hollering at her because she could not find her scrapbook and thought her mother must have misplaced it. Shashi calms her down, comforts her and tells her that her book is in the almirah under her clothes. Shashi says, "I kept it there just to make sure it is safe and no one reads it, and even I did not read it." "If you know how to read then only you could have read it", Sapna replied and hangs up the phone.

Shashi took a moment. She could not accept it. She got so hurt and disheartened. Felt so humiliated, burst into tears and loses her confidence. Laurent notices her uneasiness and starts walking with her. Language being a barrier, he was not able to comfort her. And now she delivers one of the two iconic speeches in the movie.

She says that what license do children have to treat their parents like this and humiliate them. This generation and age group does not know the meaning of reverence. They treat their parents like a garbage can, to dump whatever they feel like. What sort of bond is this? Their parents work hard and try their best to make their children happy and content but how simply they hurt us in return. Children reckoned to be innocent and pure but what kind of innocence allows you to take advantages of your parent's weaknesses. One can teach their children, give them proper education and feed them all the bookish knowledge easily. But how can one teach their children about sentiments, feelings and how to take care of someone else's feelings? Shashi pours out all her feelings in front of Laurent. She is accurate. Due to the generation gap, children fail to understand their parents' feelings and emotions. Especially in teenage, children believe that they are experienced enough to make their own choices and hates anyone who tries to interrupt and change their opinion, and mostly it's their parents. Sometimes parents are at fault. They are well aware of each other's weaknesses and making fun of each other's trigger points, not only in front of their children but also with a third person. The other person thinks it is okay to mock their weaknesses and eventually ends up hurting.

An inconspicuous theme highlighted in this scene is that emotions do not require language or words to be conveyed. Even though Shashi said everything in Hindi but Laurent did understand what Shashi was trying to convey. Emotions can be conveyed from one person to another. But often it happens when you share an intimate connection with the speaker. It firmly lays its emphasis on Laurent progressing feelings for Shashi.

History is repeating itself. The same thing happened with Shashi again. Shashi delivers that speech while walking with Laurent and then sits on a chair outside a cafe. Shashi is still mad at her daughter and could not stop talking about her toxic behavior. A waiter approaches her and asks to place an order. Shashi, paid no heed, places her order without any hesitation in correct English. Shashi started talking about her daughter again but Laurent notices it and then tells her. Shashi could not believe what Laurent said. Instantly her mood lights up and she gets overwhelmed and gains her confidence back. This is how the story connects. How the older version of Shashi was fearful, timid and insecure. She was fumbling while placing an order but look at her now. She is moulding and evolving into a matured and confident lady.

The song '*Badla Nazara*' by *Shilpa Rao* beautifully depicts the journey of Shashi and how magnificently she has unfolded.

"Teda lagta hai sab kuchh yoon

Achcha lagta hai phir bhi kyon

I am trying - vying dekho to

I am liking - viking this that woh

This that woh

Dhime dhime, slowly-slowly

I am learning - wearning seekhoon - weekhoon nai zuban

Dhime dhime, slowly-slowly

I am learning - wearning seekhoon - weekhoon nai zuban"

The song explains that she is learning something new and she is relishing it. The music video shows how confident she is now. She used to walk normally and ordinarily on the streets but now she walks boldly like a boss lady, fearlessly like a conqueror.

The story shifts its point. Shashi leaves for her classes the next day and the story unravels another prominent theme that is homosexuality. David Sir is gay and his boyfriend breaks up with him. That is how this theme comes up. Homosexuality or people with different sexual orientation are treated disparately. It is still a taboo in Asian countries. People still hesitate to talk about it openly. The same thing happened in class. The concept of man attracted to the other man was unacceptable but Shashi-coming from a homophobic society (India)-made it easier for everyone by stating her believes that everyone has the liberty to live life in their way whether to be with the choice of sexual preferences or so on. We all are just primary human beings with distinct personalities that differ from each other and that does not give us the right to discriminate. We should respect everyone's opinion and try to understand it from their point of view. Everyone has their perspective and one should be open to change. People with different sexual orientation are humans too and they fight for their existence. If a person cannot accept a new thought, he has no right to criticize it.

Sir David enters the class and seems a bit blue. It is justified by his attire, as he usually wears bright and prominent colors but today, he is wearing black and grey. David Sir starts the topic-Talking. He asks the students to talk about things they like and dislike in New York. Ramamurthy, being the first one to answer, talks about the prejudice he faces at his workplace. He elaborates his point by saying that he feels inferior when his co-workers make fun of his English. He wants to prove them that it is incorrect and feel self-confident.

Salman Khan shares a loving and sympathetic but also humorous message of brotherhood. English class symbolizes diversification but they have a common notion to be there and that is what unifies them, giving a message of 'unanimity in diversity.'

Now comes the secretive person in the class Udumbke. As he speaks his first word, everyone gets shocked because they thought he was dumb. Udumbke tells everyone that he likes the English class and shares his quality of being a good listener. He is genuinely interested in knowing what others have to say. And in the end, he shares something personal that partially justifies the introverted character that he is also gay. Earlier he must be insecure that people will judge him but everyone comforted him and wholeheartedly accepted him as he is.

Finally, it is Laurent's turn. Initially, he denies to speak but then David's Sir asks him that what does he like about the class. "Shashi" he replied. Everyone gets curious and inquisitive to know more. Laurent then starts confessing his admiration for Shashi and how praiseworthy her beauty is.

Shashi kind of gets embarrassed, as the class ends, she also leaves. Laurent calls out her name but she did not listen to him. Rama came to him and rebukes him for his behavior in class. He tells him about Indian women, their culture and how conservative and traditionalistic they are. Laurent leaves and tries to catch her up. Fortunately, he somehow manages to catch the train. He sees Shashi and sits beside her, apologized for creating a scene in class and started praising and honoring her beautiful features again. He is drawn towards her. Shashi says that it's been ages since someone said anything nice about her and she is just taking her time to digest it. It shows how hurtful and depreciated she is. Appreciation and gratefulness are the key. It is clear that Shashi has low self-esteem and always feels inferior because she has never been appreciated enough. It is very important to acknowledge a person and appreciate their efforts because it prompts them to do things in a better way. By thanking a person, you build their self-assurance which enables them to put extra efforts in the future. By doing this you also strengthen your character with a positive and convinced attitude that reflects in you. It is very easy to adjudge someone but it takes a lot of courage and spirit to appreciate someone. Your one appreciation can positively change a person perspective. We must learn to give and not just take.

The next day David sir announces an exam-A five minutes long speech in English-that all the students have to clear to get a certificate. Shashi gets into a state of total confusion because her nieces' wedding and the English exam are on the same date. Class ends and Shashi and Laurent get into an elevator. Shashi, by mistake, pushes the button to go up on the top floor as she's about to press another button, Laurent stops her. They reach the top of that building; he asks Shashi to explore it. Shashi gets amazed and fascinated by seeing such tall buildings for the first time. Laurent asks her to look down the building. She does that but then she gets scared of the height and immediately moves backwards. Laurent held her in his arms. He brings his face closer to hers as if he is about to kiss her. Shashi gets anxious and scared, she pushes him away and with shaking legs, she left that building. A song-

Gustakh Dil by Shilpa Rao plays that cinematographically, enhances the beauty of the scene. The lyrics superbly explains the chaos.

As Shashi comes back from her English class, she sees her family members there. They were supposed to arrive after a week but they change their plans. Shashi's face instantly lights up. She gets so overwhelmed and hugs them. Then she goes to her room, washes her face and gains back all her courage. At night, Satish asks her, "how are you able to manage here and travel places without knowing English?" it was sarcastic. He is meeting his wife after three weeks and instead of saying anything pleasing to her or making her feel adored, he made a sarcastic remark.

The next day Shashi's family, along with Radha goes for a Manhattan tour. Shashi wants to go to her class and Radha, being very supportive, helps her. Shashi comes up with an excuse that her leg is hurting, so she will not join them further and sits in front of a food cart. Satish gives her a ghastly look but Radha takes everyone with her, giving Shashi a free way to leave from there and attend her English class. After the class ends, Laurent gives her a crepe. But Shashi started yelling at him. She made everything clear that she is married and has two kids. She screams at him a lot. In return, Laurent did not say a word and he showed her the way to Empire State building. Eventually, Shashi accepts his crepe and left. On the other side of the story, Sagar gets injured and everyone started spontaneously looking for Shashi as if it was her duty to take care of children, whereas Shashi reaches the point where they separated their ways and started looking for her family. She could not find her family, so she started rummaging her phone in the handbag. Then she realizes that her phone is not with her and calls Radha from a payphone on the street. That is when she came to know that her son got injured. Shashi gets so concerned and started panicking. She reaches home as soon as she could and meets Sagar. He was alright. Shashi wraps her arms around him and embraces him. Satish gives her that weird look again. At night before sleeping, Satish says to Shashi that if she did not want to go with her family, she could have just said it. Satish felt left out for the first time and he responded weirdly. But what about Shashi? She used to feel that all the time and she never said a word.

Shashi gets sad and discouraged, she decides to leave her English classes because she is not able to take care of her family and her so-called duties are not being fulfilled. Shashi calls herself selfish for doing something for herself. She forgets all the embarrassment and humiliation she had to face because of her incapability to speak in English. This is the only scene that I did not like in this movie. If a woman is doing something for herself, that is not selfish. It is self-love and everyone is allowed to do that. A woman should know her worth and should understand how precious she is. The amount of mortification Shashi has to face because of her weak English motivated her to take this step. And now, when she is almost done with it, she quits.

The next day, everyone started preparing for the wedding. They all were discussing and Satish passes a comment on Shashi that she is born to make *laddus*. Radha and Shashi look at each other. Radha makes Shashi realize her purpose of being alive. No one is born to serve a person or to do only a specific thing. Life gives us numerous chances and the goal of life changes from time to time. We accomplish one task, aim at another and that is what keeps us progressing and growing. Shashi realizes her mistake of leaving English class but Radha realizes that something is going on inside her head. Pre-wedding ceremonies have already started. Radha executes her plan and connects Shashi with everyone over a phone call. That is how Shashi takes her classes. It is the last day of English class and everyone is missing her. As the phone call is about to end, Laurent takes the phone and asks Shashi for a cup of coffee, she ignores it hangs up the phone. Radha was listening to her conversation with Laurent. Radha then says to Shashi that Laurent likes her. Shashi replies that instead of love, she wants respect. This scene shows how hurt she is and criticizes the theme of self-respect. Now the question arises, how can you demand people to accept you if you cannot accept yourself with your shortcomings and imperfections? A person can only be respected and adored by others if he loves and respects himself. It means that you should always be confident enough to speak up when someone troubles you, hurts your feelings or do you wrong. You need to take good care of your mental health and accept yourself for who and what you are. Accepting yourself is not as easy as it sounds like but it is a decisive action that enables you to be your own best friend.

The wedding and exam day arrives. Now the story has two segments. One side shows Shashi's classmates getting ready to deliver a speech for their English exam. Another side shows how Shashi is doing all the tasks related to the wedding before time. So that she can also go to her English class to deliver a speech. Shashi made special *laddus* for the wedding ceremony. As Radha and Shashi pick up those massive dishes with laddus to place them on the food section, Sagar scares them away by making a loud noise and they both drop all the *laddus* on the floor. Shashi gets disheartened. As if someone crushed her dream. She drops the idea of giving the English exam and make *laddu* again. Sagar comes to his mother and apologizes for what he did, hugs her tightly.

The wedding rituals began. Shashi gets amazed as she sees her classmates and her English teacher coming to the wedding. She introduces her classmates to her husband as her friends. The wedding rituals get completed and lunch starts. Manu stands up and raises a toast. She gives the newlywed best wishes on this incredible journey and lifetime love and happiness. Then Radha got up and asked Shashi to say something. Shashi started pondering and hesitating. Satish gets up and says that his wife does not know how to speak English.

He could not even complete his sentence, while Shashi, with all her courage, grabs his hand, interrupts him and says, "May I?"

It is another iconic speech from the movie. Shashi talks about the beauty of marriage and says that it is like a beautiful friendship. A bond of two equal people, she tells them that life is a long journey and evenhanded efforts play a vital role in fulfilling the purpose of marriage. She advises Meera and Kevin (Meera's husband) that they should never disparage each other and always support and encourage their partner. She also talks about the harsh reality of marriage that sometimes a partner does not know how the other one is feeling. But this does not mean that it is the end of everything. It is the time when a person needs to help themselves to return to equilibrium. Shashi tells them about the importance of a family. She adds up that family is the thing that binds us together and teaches us how to love and forgive others because the other person is valuable to us. And how a family is like a safe place, where

no one judges or makes fun of your weaknesses. A place where you can share things openly. Family teaches us how to get along with others and learn to help and support them. It also guides us to deal with problems and take care of everyone for no pay. Family needs love and time. That is how a bond gets more robust. With best wishes, Shashi ends her speech. Tears started rolling down from her daughter's eye. Her husband, sitting with his head bowed down because he is ashamed and guilty of his toxic behavior. Radha and her classmates give her a standing ovation. Radha's expression shows that she is so proud of her aunt. Shashi after giving that speech looks at David Sir. He approves her speech and gives her a certificate and that made Shashi happy.

Shashi starts distributing *laddus* and then gives one to Laurent. Shashi then conveys a beautiful message of self-love and how important it is to accept oneself. Self-love is self-care and doing things you enjoy as well as following your dreams. It is taking some time out for yourself and realizing that it is okay to have some me-time, do things that you enjoy, relax and not feeling guilty about it. Self-love is loving yourself the way you would love somebody else and it is necessary.

Shashi then goes to Satish to give *laddus*, she gives him two *laddus*. Shashi, guilty of what he did, asks Shashi that if she still loves her husband, Shashi elegantly replies that, why would she give him two *laddus* if she doesn't love him, they exchange smiles. And in the end, they all dance. The next day Godbole family has to leave for India, Shashi with tear-filled eyes goes to the airport with her family. Gets on a plane, the air hostess asks them if they want a newspaper. Satish takes an English newspaper while Shashi asks for a Hindi newspaper. According to me, she asks for a Hindi newspaper because even though she had overcome her insecurity of not being able to speak in English but she wants to stay true to her roots. This scene signifies that she has huge respect for her ethnicity, culture and Hindi language. Earlier she was ashamed but now she is proud of it. and with another beautiful message of respecting own culture, the movie ends.

Character Sketch

Shashi Godbole (Sridevi)

Shashi Godbole, as depicted in the film is an elegant lady, very gentle and composed in nature. She is a very supportive, encouraging and understanding wife to a man, Satish (Adil Hussain) who never misses a chance to embarrass her. Shashi is a caring and devoted mother to a vexatious daughter, Sapna (Navika Kotia) who mocks at her every time she pronounces something wrong and her incapability to not speak in English; a lovely son, Sagar (Shivansh Kotia) who cares about his mother and repays her love. Shashi is also a diligent daughter-in-law to Satish's mother. Apart from being an excellent wife, mother and daughter-in-law; she enjoys cooking and has a half-time *Laddo* making business.

Shashi's care and devotion towards her family are praiseworthy. She is the backbone of her family. She takes all her tasks as her duties and performs them religiously. She loves her family selflessly; devoting her life to her family and completely neglecting her existence. Shashi's desire to learn English justifies this point. In a scene when Shashi goes to the coffee shop to buy a cup of coffee but she could not understand what the barista was asking her-the language and lack of confidence comes up as a barrier- Shashi gets anxious and then she ran away from that place. Tears filled her eyes as she was afraid; that is when her niece comes up to her, as they started walking ahead Shashi's niece saw an advertisement on the bus that says

"Learn to speak English in 4 weeks"

And there was contact information given below that ad. Shashi memorizes their contact number and that is how she started learning English.

All that humiliation that she had to deal with motivated her to learn English. Shashi learns English and it served as a tight slap on society and to all the people who criticized her. Her husband and her daughter get ashamed of their wrongdoing. Shashi ends up loving herself and forgives her family and that's how the movie ended on a positive note.

Satish Godbole (Adil Hussain)

Satish depicts the character of a loving father to Sapna and Sagar, an obedient son to his mother but a not-so-supportive husband. as shown in the movie, his character has some toxic traits. it points out one of the most prominent and basic problems in India, that is male chauvinism. The term suggests that male is superior to female in terms of skills and aptitude. Satish's character is like that. He never fails to belittle his wife, not only in front of his family but also others.

His character also shows an image of an unsupportive husband. Marriage runs on equal efforts and appreciation for it. If one of them is failing at it or lacking behind it burdens the other and creates differences. That is what happens with Shashi. Shashi is an example of an ideal wife and a mother; she completes all her tasks sincerely to please everyone. On the other hand, her husband fails to reciprocate. Not only he fails to repay her love, but he also embarrasses and upsets her and mocks at her insecurities, he even questioned her worth because of him. But Shashi never argues with him and tolerates everything calmly. And in the end, she proves him wrong and makes him feel guilty about his toxic behavior.

Sapna Godbole (Navika Kotia)

Sapna portrays the character of a vexatious daughter to her mother. Her character points out themes like generation gap, insensitivity and unsupportive behavior towards her mother. Sapna, like her father, makes fun of Shashi whenever she pronounces a word wrong and never misses a chance to embarrass her. She felt ashamed of her mother when Shashi asked her teacher to speak in Hindi with her. Sapna humiliated her mother throughout the movie but realizes her mistake in the end when her mother delivers a speech in English. She starts crying and understands how bad she made her feel and unsupportive she had been. a children's job is not only to

perform well in academics but also to take care of them. Ordinarily, when kids grow up and get educated, they make this weird perception that they know much more than their parents, resulting in their respect towards their parents taking a nosedive. This behavior affects them. No matter where you are in life, they will always remain your parents, so you hate to listen to them. Due to the generation gap, there may be a difference in point of views but a parent will always advise you what's best for you so you should their opinions and take care of their sentiments. Sapna eventually realizes it.

Sagar Godbole (Shivansh Kotia)

Sagar portrays an image of a lovely son. Like her mother, he loves his family. He cares about her mother and notices everything. He is too young to scold his father or his sister for their embarrassing behavior but he tries to comfort his mother as much as he can. He realizes the importance of a family and especially her mother and always takes good care of her.

After Shashi's speech, he faces light up. It was pretty clear that he is so proud of her mother. And in the end, she scolds her sisters and says that you should think twice before you speak anything in front of mom in English, she knows better than you.

Mrs. Godbole (Sulabha Deshpande)

She plays the role of Shashi's mother-in-law. She adores Shashi and Shashi adores her too. She has a short yet significant role in the movie. She displays the character of an old, elegant, sweet and caring grandmother, mother and mother-in-law. Like Sagar, she always loved and supported Shashi in every possible way. She is the one who encouraged Shashi to travel alone to New York without any worries. Mrs. Godbole also breaks the stereotype that a mother-in-law is always rude, harsh and critical. she is the opposite of what a person's mind perceives.

Radha (Priya Anand)

She played the role of Radha. A sweet, quirky, affectionate and supportive niece to Shashi. she comes to know about Shashi's English class and kept it a secret. she supported and helped Shashi from time to time. she notices Satish immoral and wicked behavior towards Shashi. She did not say anything and waited for the right opportunity. At Meera's wedding when Manu raises a toast, Radha gets up and asks Shashi to do the same, this was her opportunity to prove everyone wrong. Shashi shuts everyone's mouth by giving a speech in English. Radha, as always, appreciated her a lot.

Radha is a ray of hope in the life of Shashi. she has been her pillar of strength. Radha has been through all thicks and thins with Shashi and it all lead to a fruitful outcome.

CONCLUSION

English Vinglish is indeed a brilliant movie. Bollywood movies, with time and evolution, has influenced and changed the mentality of the preponderance of Indians and eradicated many stereotypes related to motherhood. But *English Vinglish* shows it from a mother's perspective that how a woman keeps up with the change.

This movie throws a light on all the prominent yet suppressed issues that a woman has to face. And then shows how a woman, patiently, deals with all the problems and then proves herself.