

An Essential Factor for Singing Rabindrasangeet

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Abstract

Rabindrasangeet is an unique art-form of literature and culture. The identity of it lies in the lyric, tune and rhythm as well as in the usage of language itself. The inner significance of the song is expressed by singing only. Pronunciation plays a pivotal role in singing Tagore Song.

Keywords: *Lyric, Melody, Rhythm, Pronunciation, Dexterity, Nectar, Dialect, Grasped, Endeavour, Elegant, Colloquial, Revealed, Impulse, Posture, Syntax, Flourish, Preserve, Sophisticated, Desire, Achieve.*

Rabindrasangeet is based on literature. We cannot express this literary subject just by reading. Especially where music is not just a matter of lesson, it is a matter of singing. Therefore, appropriate pronunciation is an essential approach for singing Tagore Songs.

Since nineteenth century various evolutionary changes concerning pronunciation have been noticed in the context of singing Rabindrasangeet. If we want to feel Rabindrasangeet properly, we have to know the literature and also the mystery behind the combination of lyric and melody. The lyrical form of Rabindrasangeet helps us to picturize the proper image of the song. Therefore it is a very salient feature that we have to understand the importance of Bengali language and the linguistic pronunciation. Difference in bengali pronunciation is noticed most of the cases among the inhabitants of different geographical areas. The form of Rabindrasangeet will be changed completely if slightest modification in pronunciation has been done, which is not desirable. The correct mood of the song is diminished by inappropriate pronunciation.

Let us start with Tagore's thought of music —

“আমাদের মনোভাব গাঢ়তম তীব্রতম রূপে প্রকাশ করিবার উপায় স্বরূপে সঙ্গীতের স্বাভাবিক উপপত্তি।
যে উপায়ে ভাব সর্বোৎকৃষ্টরূপে প্রকাশ করি, সেই উপায়েই আমরা ভাব সর্বোৎকৃষ্টরূপে অন্যের মনে
নিবিষ্ট করিয়া দিতে পারি।” (1)

Now it is understood that the music is the optimum means to express the position of mind. Singers create a medium to make others feel the song which is possible when singer himself is able to realize the song properly and reveal it by singing. Rabindranath imposed a great importance to these two issues. The process of feeling may be transmitted into the reader or listener's mind

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with such a dexterity that they also feel it in the way Rabindranath portrayed. From this point of view, proper pronunciation is the technique to make the reader understand the right way of singing.

The question arises in the mind of the theorist that the song may be properly understood by adopting so many methods. That is a new idea of the written form of the song which may come to mind as soon as the song is recited. The essence of the song is hidden in the lyrical form. Just reading of the lyric gives emotional momentum to the mind but when the lyric is sung in tune the deep appeal of the lyric comes to the mind with clear and transparent idea. We are aware that the lyrics are the nectar of Rabindrasangeet. Perception of mind is being awakened through the correct pronunciation of the lyric. Simple, clear language binds people's mind with deep connotations and sensibilities unknowingly. Everyone's mind is being liberated due to balanced composition of language and melody by Tagore.

Now I would like to site an example of Rabindrasangeet–

“আমার মুক্তি আলোয় আলোয় এই আকাশে
আমার মুক্তি ধুলায় ধুলায় ঘাসে ঘাসে।
দেহ মনের সুদূর পারে হারিয়ে ফেলি আপনারে,
গানের সুরে আমার মুক্তি উর্ধ্ব ভাসে।।
আমার মুক্তি সর্বজনের মনের মাঝে,
দুঃখ-বিপদ তুচ্ছ করা কঠিন কাজে।
বিশ্বধাতার যজ্ঞশালা আত্মহোমের বহিঃশালা-
জীবন যেন দিই আত্মতা মুক্তি-আশে।” (2)

All kind of human emotions like laughter, cry, happiness, sorrow, joy, triumph, calamity are the part of life. Human life is not fulfilled without them. Rabindranath denoted this world as “বিশ্বধাতার যজ্ঞশালা”। If we want to keep ourself alive in this earth, we have to pass through sorrow and to accept the natural system with courage. The door of the mind will be opened one day through sorrow. Sadness helps to know the truth. Purification of mind will be acquired only by overcoming danger. People will feel their own strength.

We have to unravel the underlying meaning of the song, with the correct pronunciation. The dimensional notation must be followed accurately – viz. ‘Meer’(মীড়), ‘sparsho swar’(স্পর্শস্বর), ‘aa-karanto’(আ-কারান্ত), ‘o-karanto’(ও-কারান্ত), ‘otikomol’(অতিকোমল), ‘onukomol’(অনুকোমল), ‘hasanto’(হসন্ত), etc. These signs help to understand the pronunciation of song.

Let us explain it with the help of the notation —

II { পৰা বপা -১ | মা -১ | রা -১ I সা সমা -১ | মগা -পক্ষা | পা -১ I
আ• মা ব্ হ্ ক্ তি • আ লো• হ্ আ• • • লো হ্

I (পা -সী সী | ধনা -১ | ধপা -১) } I সা সা -১ | রা -১ | রা -১ I
এ ই আ কা• • পে• • আ মা ব্ হ্ ক্ তি •

I রা গা -রা | গা -১ | গা -মা I মা পা -বা | মপা -১ | মগা -মা I
হ্ লা হ্ হ্ • লা হ্ বা দে • বা• • সে• •

I মা -সী সী | ধনা -১ | ধপা -১ II
এ ই আ কা• • পে• •

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The meaning of the words are easily grasped by the help of the notation. The poet has explained the difficult mantras of life in simple language of the song. The correct pronunciation is essential to perceive these mantras.

His extraordinary artistic talent has obscured the art endeavour in such a way that it is impossible to comprehend how it was created. We need to be aware of the literary aspect and historical context of his creation, to know the nature of this work of art. His music was not created in a day. Actually, lyric is the reflection of transformation of poem into song. How he wrote the song, creation of lyric with the combination of sound words and the presence of elegant language and colloquial language. How he wrote the song, why he wrote it and in what occasion it was written, everything has been revealed in his poems, essays and literature. Rabindranath was the first person who transformed the verse of earliest “Pali” and “Prakrit” to keep the essence intact. He enriched his music with the unimaginable application of classical rhythm and light rhythm depending on the melody of literature and the poetry.

As there are various mysteries of lyrics, if the song is not sung in conjugation with the melody, the novelty of the combination of lyric and melody remains elusive. So one thing is clear that the meaning and application of the word may not arouse deep impulse in the mind without the

correct pronunciation. It turns out that singing or reading and saying anything is a normal human process. So, naturally there is a phonetic feature for pronouncing Bengali letters - in case of song and in case of literature. These two forms are very important in music.

We may quote another opinion of Rabindranath in pursuance of the thought of Herbert Spencer—
“কণ্ঠনিঃসৃত বিভিন্নধ্বনি স্বর বিভিন্ন মনোবৃত্তির শারীরগত বিকাশ।” (3)

It is clear from these words that the way we speak has a special relationship with the emotion. In this context Rabindranath has mentioned some remarkable words -”signs of ideas” (4) and “signs of feeling.”(5) .All kinds of word have esoteric meaning. That is, some special words may express the happiness of the heart along with the melody of sorrow. Most of the times, the way we speak becomes more important. Because attitude has a relationship with music. If we read verse and prose of Rabindranath, it is possible to understand the difference between dictionary meaning and inner meaning. In this case, it is important to keep in mind the process of recovering the emotional meaning. At the same time, it is important to know the phonetic meaning. For example, the word “আমার” contextually pronounced as “আমার্” (hasanta) or the word “আমারো” (o – karanto). A word with different syllable demands something more. It is not limited to just narration. Actually, idea is revealed through pronunciation. Tagore witnessed so many diversion along with pronunciation in his songs in his lifetime. That’s why he wrote—

“আমার গানের বিকার প্রতিদিন আমি এত শুনেছি যে আমারও ভয় হয়েছে যে, আমার গানকে তার স্বকীয় রসে প্রতিষ্ঠিত রাখা হয় তো সম্ভব হবে না।” (6)

We have to come out of the dialect in order to maintain the uniqueness of the song. The feeling of the song may be felt better, if we know the correct pronunciation of the language. We have to sing Rabindrasangeet with proper pronunciation to keep it alive and to express the meaning of the song as desired. We must be alert regarding correct pronunciation along with variation, grammatical pronunciation, pronunciation posture and the rules of syntax positively.

The true meaning of the lyric of Tagore Song is flourished and the emotional meaning is achieved by singing the song with sophisticated pronunciation only. It is the key to preserve the unique feature of Rabindrasangeet and the aesthetic beauty of the song.

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