

CHICK LIT - AN OVERVIEW

Vivek R. Mirgane, Principal and Head, Department of English,
Bankatswami College, Beed, Maharashtra

Milind R. Kharat, Research Scholar, Department of English,
Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University, Aurangabad

Abstract:

The present research paper is an attempt to contemplate the meaning, nature and range of Chick Lit as a genre of literature in English. The species is being examined in relation to selected chicks of American literature. The study also aims to focus on the chick lit in the Indian writing in English, with particular emphasis on selected chicks lit novels written by Indian writers in English. 'Chick' is an American slang for a young woman, and 'lit' is a short form of literature. The chick is a literary genre that addresses the issues of contemporary femininity, often humorously and carelessly. This species became popular in the late 90s of the twentieth century, when the chicks illuminated the titles on the bestsellers lists and the prints were entirely devoted to the chicks. Although it sometimes contains romantic elements, the chick is usually not considered a direct subcategory of the romantic novel genre, because the relationship between the heroine and family or friends is often just as important as her romantic relationships. Chick Lit as a genre of literature has been neglected by critics so far, calling it a frivolous literature, written by young female students or unmarried working women about their limited world. But because they are an equally important part of our civilized society, one should respect their feelings, thoughts and reflections of life perceived by them. Chick Lit as a genre of literature should also be studied as a record of sensitive reflections of young minds and their fantastic world. Chick Lit is probably the best medium for understanding how young people react to the rapidly changing world and its consequences for their mind. Since most of the Indian population is now young, we must read in their minds that are reflected in the Chicks. The "Chick Lit" study is perhaps the virgin subject of research in English literature with a great opportunity for new discoveries and can potentially contribute to the study of English literature and English criticism. Chick Lit is a new and important emerging genre of English literature. It is a reflection of the feelings, thoughts and reactions of young girls or unmarried women working on their own world.

Key Words: *Virgin subject, discoveries, unmarried women, fantastic world.*

Study of Chick Lit is perhaps the virgin subject of research in English literature with a great opportunity for new discoveries and can potentially contribute to the study of English literature and British critics. The chick is a literary genre that addresses the issues of contemporary femininity, often humorously and carelessly. This species became popular in the late 90s of the twentieth century, when the chicks illuminated the titles on the bestsellers lists and the prints were entirely devoted to the chicks. Although it sometimes contains romantic elements, the chick is usually not considered a direct subcategory of the romantic novel genre, because the relationship between the heroine and family or friends is often just as important as her romantic relationships. Chick lit usually presents the heroine, whose femininity is strongly varied in the story. Although most often embedded in the modern world, for example in *Waiting for an Exhale*, there is also a historical staff. The issues we deal with are often more serious than consumerism. For example, the *Watermelon of Marian Keyes* presents a heroine who struggles with how to be a mother in the modern world and grows the market of a religious chick lit. As with other genres, authors

and publishers target many niche markets. Protagonists differ greatly in terms of ethnicity, age, social status, marital status, career and religion. "Chick" is an American slang for a young woman, and "lit" is a short form of literature.

The term appeared in print as early as 1988 as university slang for a course entitled "Feminine literary tradition." In 1995, CrisMazza and Jeffrey DeShell used this term as an ironic title to their edited anthology "Chick Lit: Postfeminist Fiction." The genre has been defined as a kind of feminist feminism or a second wave that goes beyond the victim woman and contains fiction covering a wide range of women's experiences, including love, courtship and gender. The collection emphasized experimental work, including violence, perversion and sexual themes. James Wolcott's 1996 article in *The New Yorker*, "*Hear Me Purr*," co-opted the term "chick lit" to ban what he called the trend of "girliness" seen in writing female journalists at the time. Works such as *Bridget Jones Diary* by Helen Fielding and Candace Bushnell's *Sex and the city* are examples of such works that helped establish the contemporary connotations of the term. The success of *Bridget Jones's Diary* and *Sex and the City* in book form confirmed the chick as an important trend in publishing. A girl's guide for hunting and fishing by Melissa Bank is considered one of the first novels created as a result of a chick lit (in fact a collection of short stories), although the term "chick lit" was widely used at the time of its creation (1999). *The Temp* by Serena Mackesy appeared in the same year.

The genre's literary conventions, not only its book covers, separate it from other types of female literature but using the genre's formulas, we get the definition conventions of a typical chick lit novel. In the years since the publication of *Bridget Jones's Diary*, chick lit has grown to include subcategories such as "hen lit," "bridal lit," and "Latina lit," but the most popular books continue to tell the story of the "traditional" chick lit heroine. She is a Caucasian, non-rural white-collar executive in her late twenties or early thirties. Her family lives somewhere in the suburbs, appear and leaves the novel as irritation in the heroine's life, and sometimes as an obstacle between her and the hero. Living in the city is about working in a little inspiring office work, with happy hours, co-workers, shopping and drinking with friends on a Saturday night (or any other night this week). Alcohol is an important part of the social life of most characters, while alcoholism is rarely discussed. At the beginning of the novel, the heroine realizes that she behaves like a college student at some point in her life, when she should be an experienced professional, happily married mother or both. After this epiphany, the heroine meets the hero, but with him an obstacle - sometimes in the form of an external factor, but often a personal barrier - it distinguishes them for most of history. When the couple unites in the last twenty pages of the novel, the heroine's life has somehow changed during her journey to him. She usually has a new job, better income, and sometimes even improved its relationships with family. Emma is changing not only in terms of personality; she also changes her material circumstances through her promotion from the marketing assistant to the marketing director. In list of Emma's secrets there is everything that is unsatisfying in her life from her relationship with her boyfriend to her unhappiness with her job. By the end, Emma's only secrets are how much she loves her job and dreams about having children with her new boyfriend. Flighty Emma Corrigan exemplifies the scatter brained and self-deprecating protagonist type that is the most popular in chick lit novels

Thus, we observe 'Chick lit' to be sexy, funny, and sharp and one of the fastest growing fiction genres today. Those of a certain age may not understand the appeal, but the mass of young women who may not have considered themselves as heavy readers are gathering in libraries to keep up with the latest trend.

Reference:

1. Bank, Mellisa, *The Girl's Guide to Hunting and Fishing*, Penguin U.S.:2000
2. Bushnell, Cadance, *Sex and the City*, Warner Books U.S., 1997
3. Chauhan Anuja, *The Zoya Factor*, India: Harper Collins, 2008
4. Rajashree, *Trust Me*, Mumbai: Rupa Publication, 2006
5. Kaushal, Swati, *Piece of Cake*, India: Penguin Global:2005