

THE PROFESSOR BY NISSIM EZEKIEL

Dr. Rajnish Mishra

Assistant Professor, Department of English

SGPG College, Sarurpur-Khurd, Meerut

**BA English Part II, Paper 2
(IWE P&P)**

14 January 2022

THE TEXT

Remember me? I am Professor Sheth.

Once I taught you geography. Now

I am retired, though my health is good. My wife died some years
back.

By God's grace, all my children

Are well settled in life.

TEXT CONTD...

One is Sales Manager,

One is Bank Manager,

Both have cars.

Other also doing well, though not so well.

Every family must have black sheep.

Sarala and Tarala are married,

Their husbands are very nice boys.

You won't believe but I have eleven grandchildren.

How many issues you have? Three?

That is good. These are days of family planning.

I am not against. We have to change with times.

TEXT CONTD...

Whole world is changing. In India also

We are keeping up. Our progress is progressing.

Old values are going, new values are coming.

Everything is happening with leaps and bounds.

I am going out rarely, now and then

Only, this is price of old age

But my health is O.K. Usual aches and pains.

No diabetes, no blood pressure, no heart attack.

This is because of sound habits in youth.

How is your health keeping?

TEXT CONTD...

Nicely? I am happy for that.

This year I am sixty-nine
and hope to score a century.

You were so thin, like stick,

Now you are man of weight and consequence.

That is good joke.

If you are coming again this side by chance,

Visit please my humble residence also.

I am living just on opposite house's backside.

INTRODUCTION

The Professor by Nissim Ezekiel is particularly remarkable for its depiction of Indianness in a satirical tone.

The poem is written in very simple language and in prose-poem style. No particular metre or rhyme scheme has been followed in writing the poem The Professor.

ANALYSIS

The poem *The Professor* can be classified as a dramatic monologue.

In its abrupt beginning, one-way conversation and the presence of a silent listener, *The Professor* qualifies the basic requirements of a monologue.

ANALYSIS CONTINUED

The poem begins with the professor's question: "Remember me?" Then he himself gives the identity that he is Professor Sheth. It is clear from his speech that he is talking to one of his past students whom he taught geography. He goes on to tell his student that he is now retired but his health is still good at this age. He also mentions that his wife is no more.

The professor is thankful to God that all his children are well-established in their life. One of his sons is a Bank Manager, and another one is a Sales Manager. Both his sons own cars.

Then he talks about his third son who is not doing so well as the other two. He regards him as the 'black sheep' of the family. "Black sheep" here means that the son is probably immoral, unprofessional and somewhat reckless. Even then, the professor protects his son by saying that every family generally has such a member.

The professor also proudly declares the unbelievable fact that he has eleven grandchildren. And for the first time, he now gives his student a chance to speak. He asks his student how many issues he has. It seems that the professor is mocking at his student on hearing that he has only three children. He also assures his student that this is not so bad. Nowadays people are more conscious about family planning. And he is not against family planning. He accepts the change that time brings.

The professor now speaks of the changes that the whole world is facing. He feels that the Indians are also keeping up with the change. We are progressing with time. Old conceptions are going and new ideas are coming. Everything is changing at a fast pace.

Now the professor says that he rarely goes out, as he is a retire person. This is also due to the old age that he can no longer walk or travel much. But he is proud that he is keeping good health with only occasional aches and pain. He has no diabetes, no blood pressure, and no heart attack.

The professor continues to speak of his health. He is still keeping his good health because of his good habits in youth. He then asks the student about his health and he is happy to hear that he is keeping it up well.

Now, the professor reminds the student that he was so thin, comparing him to a stick. But now he (the student) has gained some weight and power. The professor perhaps indicates the social position of the student, as well as his physical growth. And he also mentions that it is a good joke, in case the student doesn't get it properly. In these lines the professor requests his student to visit his residence if he comes this way again in future. He also tries to point out the location of his house, that is, the back side of the house on the opposite side of the road.