

Influence of Doraemon on Bangladeshi Children: A CDA perspective

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Abstract

Cartoon series are basically for the children's entertainment. Sometimes not only the children but also the adults enjoy cartoon series. According to Wai-ming (2002), Doraemon is now a popular culture in Japan. It is so much popular that Disney channel is telecasting this series in Hindi language. This paper is a critical discourse analysis of how a Japanese anime of Hindi language is embedding Hindi language into the Bangladeshi children of age 3 to 8 years. This paper discusses the reasons for the exercise of Hindi language by the Bangladeshi children and the use of Hindi language instead of English after watching Doraemon. These little children are using Hindi words with Bangla language. This sort of use of Hindi language is actually a way of dominating Bangla language, and a reason for linguistic imperialism. This paper also discusses how Doraemon has cultural effects in Bangladesh. For data collection, 500 children and 100 families were interviewed from the urban area of Bangladesh. Theoretical framework is done on Saussure's Semiotics theory, and Phillipson's (1992) language and cultural imperialism theory. From this data, it is found out that the children of Bangladesh are using Hindi Language mostly. They prefer to talk in Hindi than English language. Parents are facing social problems also.

1.0 Introduction

It has been years that imperialism in language has been observed in Asia especially in Indian sub continent where there are approximately several hundreds of languages that have been victimized either socially or culturally (Simpson, 2007). It is said that in every one kilometer language is changing, and it can be noticed that in generation after generation language itself has been changing as it is the nature of language. Language turns to a

new dimension by the imposition of a culturally as well as socially more powerful language than the other and that is named as linguistic imperialism (*ibid.*). Simpson (2007) said that by the term linguistic imperialism there have been so many adverse effects to a particular language and with the flow of time one language has been victimized. Even it may happen that with the strong imposition of a powerful language, another language can lose its existence. Instances are many and Bangla language is one of the striking victims of linguistic imperialism. It has long been noticed that Hindi language plays a vital dominance to the basic ground of Bangla language more specifically to the budding kids of Bangladesh who are getting oriented with so many Hindi words very easily through cartoons, Bollywood songs, daily soap and so on aired by different Indian satellite channels. As a result little kids are adopting not only the Hindi language but also their tradition, culture, creed etc (*ibid.*). Hindi language is not only having influence over Bangla language but also has its similar dominance over the languages of Pakistan, Srilanka, Nepal, Bhutan, and specially the Indian sub-continent countries (*ibid.*).

Doraemon is a popular Japanese cartoon series at present. At first it was published as manga or comic series in Japan, and then it is adapted into anime. According to Brenner (2007), comic series is known as 'manga' in Japan, and cartoon series is called 'anime.' It is now broadcasted in Indian Disney Channel and Hungama TV channel in Asian zone. As both of these channels dubbed *Doraemon* in Hindi language, Bangladeshi children are bound to watch this cartoon series in Hindi Language. This paper looks at the effects of *Doraemon* on Bangladeshi children and how these children are being influenced by this cartoon series socially, culturally, and linguistically. Children of 3 to 8 years old usually acquire language and learn language from their family, friends, educational institute, and other environments. In this era, satellite channels, home theater, CD/DVD, and these types of sources influence a child socially, culturally, and in so many other ways. This is a problem embedded in our world of literature which impedes the development of the children. *Doraemon* is a popular anime among Bangladeshi children. Not only Bangladeshi children, but also

adults are watching this show on TV. This paper focuses on analyzing discourse critically in terms of discourse, ideology, and power. This text is appropriate for critical discourse analysis (CDA) because Doraemon is influencing the children through satellite channels, media, and other source of communication and consumption. According to Haque (2008), CDA is always concerned about social issues embedded in society and try to analyze the hidden power in it (p. 11). Doraemon has the power to manipulate children's process of acquiring and learning their mother tongue. We are not discouraging everyone from watching Doraemon; rather we are showing that Hindi language is getting mixed with Bangla language which is a sign of dominating Bangla language.

2.0 Materials and Methods

Phillipson (1992) mentioned about Galtung's (2006) theory of structural imperialism in his *Linguistic Imperialism*. According to Galtung's (2006) theory, imperialism theory suggests six interlocking types of imperialism: economic, political, and communicative (communication and transport), cultural, and social.

Phillipson (1992) suggested there are imperialism like racial imperialism, and ideological imperialism. He also said that linguistic imperialism is a sub-type of linguicism. Linguicism is defined as "ideologies, structures, and practices which are used to legitimate, effectuate, and reproduce an unequal division of power and resources (both material and immaterial) between groups which are defined on the basis of language" (p. 47).

Linguicism may work with sexism, racism, and classism simultaneously, but its priority is related to language and its ideologies (*ibid.*). According to Barker and Galansinski (2001), "language is a core case of cultural studies that language does not mirror and independent object world but constructs and constitutes it" (p. 12). Fairclough (1989) discussed the language use and for doing that he disagreed with Saussure's (1915) 'langue' and 'parole'. In Saussure's (1915) theory, he described 'langue' as a system or code which is used by every person in community; whereas, he said 'parole' is said or

written word that is utterly depended on a person's choice not a social choice (In Bally, Sechehaye, & Riedlinger, 1915). Fairclough (1989) said that language varies according to the social identities, ideologies. Thus, Saussure's (1915) individualistic idea of 'parole' is unacceptable (*ibid.*). Fairclough (1989) described language as a form of social practice. As this paper is going to focus on the dominating nature of Hindi language over Bangla language in Bangladesh, Fairclough's (1989) and Phillipson's (1992) theory of linguistic imperialism is being used here.

Bangla language and Bengali culture both are in alarming situation. This paper investigates how Hindi language is dominating Bangla language, and Bangladeshi children are acquiring and learning Hindi language very easily. Philliopson (1992), Fairclough (1989), and Saussure (1915) have talked about linguistic imperialism several times. They were intended to delineate how English language is dominating other languages. Before the reasons for domination of Hindi Language over Bangla language is discussed, the origin of these two languages should be discussed at first. According to Sen (1911), Bangla language is originated from Gouda Prakrit. That time Gouda Prakrit was known as the language of evil. Krisna Pandit named this language, and according to him,

“ऋ and ॠ change into ऌ and ॡ, and ऩ is pronounced as ञ in this form of Prakrita (*ibid.*).”

After the revival of Hinduism, Bangla language lost its pride and Sanskrit language was used by the Sanskrit scholars (*ibid.*). Sen (1911) also said that during the reign of the Mughals, many Arabic and Persian words mixed with Bangla language. Hindu scholars started to sanskritise Bangla language. Sen said, “Vaisnava literature brought many Hindi words into Bengali” (p. 386). Not only the language, the Bengali people started to follow the costumes of the Hindustani people (*ibid.*). Thus, it can be said that as Hindi language was mixed with Bangla language, most of the Bengali people can speak or understand Hindi language without any effort. Doraemon is doing the same thing to Bangladeshi people. Hindi language

is not only over-powering Bangla language but it is also dominating Urdu language. According to Amritavalli and Jayaseelan (2007), Hindi and Urdu language share common forms of grammar. Thus, when the speaker of Urdu language speaks informally the distinguished feature of Urdu language tends to disappear from the language. They also said that this standard form of language is used by the Bollywood films, and appreciated by the speakers of both Hindi and Urdu language (*ibid.*). In Nepal, Hindi language has become an alarming issue. BBC reported in 2008 that some Nepalese are trying to make Hindi their national language. This proves that Hindi has a great influence on Indian sub-continent people. So to say linguistic imperialism is surrounded by socio-cultural dominance over a language and one can imagine this change in years. In terms of regionalism one language can easily be affected by the enforcement of a neighboring language that has a vast dimension of socio cultural entity and thus the affected language can be in premonition state. Indian Hindi language is one of the striking languages that (Hindi language) has long become a threat for the neighboring language like Bangla. It is because the new generation especially children are acquiring the skill of learning Hindi. As far as Indian constitution declares, Hindi should be given importance to diversify its culture, creed and history. According to Article 351 of Indian constitution (2007):

It shall be the duty of the Union to promote the spread of the Hindi language, to develop it so that it may serve as a medium of expression for all the elements of the composite culture of India and to secure its enrichment by assimilating without interfering with its genius, the forms, style and expressions used in Hindustani and in the other languages of India specified in the Eighth Schedule, and by drawing, wherever necessary or desirable, for its vocabulary, primarily on Sanskrit and secondarily on other languages. (p. 216-217)

4.0 Findings and Discussion

Children learn anything very easily when they are of 3 to 8 years old. After their birth, the first educational institute for them is their family. They

try to imitate their parents and other relatives. Specially, they acquire language at this very small age. If they start to hear Hindi language at this age, they easily can acquire Hindi language. As Dr. Sen (1911) mentioned that Hindi language is already mixed in Bangla language, it is our concern that Hindi language should not be used by the children or adult as everyday language.

500 children who are of 5 to 8 years old were asked about their comments about Doraemon. They were interviewed in their classrooms in an informal way. Both open and close ended questions were asked. They were asked why they like Doraemon. 495 children out of 500 children (that is, 99%) said that they like Doraemon because he helps Nobita. Doraemon has gadgets. Thus he can help Nobita at any time. It may be alarming that children might become dependent on other sources after watching this cartoon series. To find out the effect of *Doraemon* on children, the researchers went to 2 Bangla medium, 2 English medium schools. The children of class I and II were interviewed. They were asked to say some Hindi dialogues from the cartoon series. They were eager to say anything related to Doraemon. In a class of 25 students, 20 students can sing the title song of Doraemon. 466 students out of 500 (that is, 93.2%) can speak Hindi fluently than English. Thus, it can be said that Bangladeshi children are acquiring Hindi easily; for instance, when a student of standard two named Priyanka was asked which programme was her favorite; she answered without any hesitation, *Doraemon*. She added that she loved Hindi language because of that cartoon. Sentences like “Mujhe ye de do Nobita, nahin tum ye nahin de sakhti Nobita” were her favorite lines. Aaria, another grade 2 student of South Point School from Dhaka, gave similar responses to the same question and her best lines were appended:

“Mom mujhe dinner chahiye.” (Trans. Mom, I want dinner.)

“kaise ho? Hum acchhe hain.” (Trans. How are you? I am fine.)

We asked 45 adults of our country to say some dialogues from the cartoon series Doraemon. They were mostly the parents or relatives of those 500 interviewed children. It is surprising that 42 parents out of 45 (among

them 35 were the teachers of South Point School), that is 93%, know the dialogues from Doraemon, though they are not a regular audience of this cartoon series (Table 1).

Respondents	Hindi Dialogues from Doraemon	Bangla Translation
R1	Mummy mujhe nahin chhoregi.	মা আমাকে ছাড়বে না।
R2	Doraemon, meri madat karo.	ডরেমন, আমাকে সা ।
R3	Nobita: Mere saath hi hamesha aisa keu hota hain?	?
R4	Zian: Nobita tumhari itni himmat? Ye lo, ye lo, ye bhi lo.	? , , ।
R5	Nobita: Mujhe aaj bhi itna sara homework mila.	
R6	Jian's common song: Main hoon Jian, main hoon sabse takadwar, /Meri awaz bohu sureeli, /Log sun le ho jaye madh-hosh.	- , , / , / ।
R7	Doraemon kuchh karo. Humein Jian se bachao.	, । ।
R8	Nobita: Phir se maa ki lecture suru ho gayee.	- শুরু ।
R9	Jiyan: hee hee he! Tumharey pichhe kya hain? Mujhhee	!

	doo! ohhh New Comic? Yeh meri pass rahega. Tumhe nehi dunga. Haa Haa Haa!	? ? !
R10	Doraemon: Nobitaaaa, tum kabhiiii nehi sudhrogey?	, ?
R11	Nobita's mom: Nobitaaa, tumhe firse test mein zero mila?	, ?
R12	Doraemon tum kaha ho? Meri madat karo.	?
R13	Jiyan: Nobita, kya tum hamari sath baseball kheloge?	, ?
	Nobita: nehi, mujhe Sujuka ki ghar jana hain.	,
	Jiyan: kyaaa? tumhari himmat kaise huya mujhe na kehne ki?	? ?
	Soniyo: Jiyan, mujhe to lagta hain ki Nobita ajkal kuch jeyada smart banne ki koshish kar raha hain.	, शुक्र

Table 1: Some Doraemon dialogues with Bangla Translation

If we observe this table 1 carefully, we will see that there are some words which are similar to Bangla words. Therefore, it is very easy for the children as well as others to learn and understand the language very easily. Not only Doraemon but also other Hindi language cartoons have impact on

Bangladeshi children. Recently, "Hatori" is one of the popular cartoons which is broadcasted on Channel Nick. This cartoon is also influencing the children to learn Hindi language.

Parents were got annoyed when we asked them about Doraemon. They told us that their children do not play outside because they want to watch Doraemon. Not only that, the parents also complained that their children are learning Hindi language very easily by watching these sorts of cartoon series. Mrs. Rumana Akter, teacher at South Point School and College, said that his son was mixing Hindi words with Bangla. For example, her son is saying, " " (Mother, what are you thinking?), " ", (Mother, tell me something). Most of the parents said that their boys and girls were using Hindi words in each and every sentence now-a-days.

Parents usually observe their children the whole day. They have noticed a huge change in their children's language, and expression. Sometimes their children want someone like Doraemon who will do all their work. Doraemon is actually making the children dependent on other people; that people might be their parents, guardian, or someone else. Recently, Bangladeshi businessmen are selling Doraemon dolls, stationeries, merchandizing products. Children are buying these products. The adults are very conscious about this present state of their children. Language is a medium to express our thought in words. However, this medium is now getting polluted. Hindi language is not fully Hindi. They are using English words also. When this sort of language is uttered by the Bangla speaker, Bangla language becomes a mixed language. We already know that many foreign words from English, Arabic, Hindi, Persian, and French language have enriched our language. Everyday new words are getting included in Bangla language. Hindi words are not only entering in Bangla language, but also it can be found in Nepalese, Pakistani, and Sinhalese language. In this way, Hindi language may become a lingua Franca in Indian sub-continent. Khan (2010) mentioned that Bangladeshi channels are not broadcasted in India, but Bangladesh government is paying local agents

2000 crore taka as tax for cable channels. This is a dominating nature of Indian media. Bangladeshi government is not doing anything regarding this issue. This media domination is linked with political and economical issue of both the countries, Bangladesh and India. Indian TV channels are very much talented in dubbing and broadcasting other products; such as, advertisements, TV series, films, and air them in their own style. Doraemon is a Japanese Cartoon; however, Indian TV channels like Disney and Hungama dubbed this cartoon and aired it in their channels. Bangladeshi TV channels do not wish to invest in cartoon channels. Furthermore, they say that Bangladesh can not afford the cost of producing 3D cartoon series or dubbing them. If Indian TV channel can broadcast Doraemon in Hindi language, Bangladeshi investors should invest in this animation sector also. Thus, the language will not be mixed with Hindi. Bangladeshi cartoon companies may dub Doraemon and telecast it through Bangla channels. It is already mentioned that in India, Bangladeshi channels are not broadcasted. Therefore, Bangladeshi government should ban Indian channels which are broadcasted in Bangladesh. Parents have to be concerned about the future of their own children. They should stop watching Hindi drama serials in front of their children. Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) can control the satellite channels very easily. BTRC should ban broadcasting of Hindi cartoon channels.

5.0 Conclusion

Bangla is the mother tongue of Bangladesh. We have great martyrs who lost their lives in the Language Movement of 1952. Their sacrifice was glorified in 1999 when 21st February declared as the International Mother Language Day. This is a matter of our pride. We should not give Indian media any chance to destroy our mother tongue. We should take care of our language. Our generation must know the correct history of our language and liberation movement. Our scholars, educators, and other concerned people are thinking about this imperialistic attitude of Hindi language. However, government must take some steps regarding this issue.

This paper will enable people to know the recent situation of Bangla language. New trends, fashions, and culture of others should be appreciated, but hampering Bangladeshi language and culture will not be accepted at any cost.

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Appendix A

Interview Questions for Children

500 children were asked these following questions.

1. Which cartoon do you watch every day?
2. Why do you like that cartoon?
3. Do you watch both Hindi and English cartoons?
4. Which one is your favorite cartoon channel?
5. Can you say some dialogues from your favorite cartoon?
6. Do you like to speak Hindi language?
7. Which language is easier to understand: Hindi or English?
8. Which language is easier to speak: Hindi or English?
9. Which products have you bought after watching the cartoon?
10. Do you wish to have someone like Doraemon to help you in every work?

Answers:

1. Doraemon, Hatori, Ben10, Thakumar Jhuli.
2. It is fun to watch cartoons.
3. Mostly Hindi, sometimes English.
4. 434 out of 500 students answered Disney Channel, 45 answered Cartoon Network, and 22 students preferred Nick.
5. "Mujhe ye de do Nobita, nahin tum ye nahin de sakhti Nobita"
6. Yes. We can speak Hindi fluently.
7. Hindi.
8. Hindi.
9. Doll, eraser, pencil, bag, water-pot etc.
10. Yes. I wish I had a Doraemon who will do my homework for me.

Appendix B

Interview Questions for Parents

45 adults were asked the following questions.

1. How many children of 5 to 8 years age group do you have in your house?
2. What type of TV programmes do your children usually watch?
3. What are the changes you observed among your children after they watch Doraemon?
4. What are the advantages you have found out of Doraemon cartoon?
5. Which language are your children using at home with Bangla language?

Answers:

1. 35 parents out of 45 said they have at least one child of 5 to 8 years old.
2. They watch Doraemon everyday. We can not watch anything for them.
3. They can speak Hindi very fluently. They use Hindi language while they are talking with us. We have prohibited them to speak Hindi language, but they do not listen to us. They do not like to go outside for playing, because that time Doraemon is aired on TV. They do not even want to go to a friend's house or cousin's house, because they do not want to miss any episode of that cartoon.
4. Doraemon does not have any moral education. Our children are learning Hindi language. I have seen other children who are watching English cartoons, they can speak English. These days, the children are very fond of Hindi language. They love to see Hindi serials, Hindi songs, and Hindi movies. They do not like to watch English language programmes. Bangladeshi TV channels do not have many programmes for the children except Sisimpur. However, our children do not watch this programme.
5. At present, they are mixing Hindi words with Bangla language. This is very alarming.