Lost in Translation

Rafay Habibullah and Rehhan Chadha discuss the loss of interest in vernaculars.

Vernacular languages, over the ages, have successfully evaded conforming to a more conventional way of communication. They represent the centuries of accumulated culture, whether it be through scriptures and text, songs, or folktales. Their preserved style of diction, idiom, and grammar, lend many features to prevalent languages such as English or Hindi today. The latter absorbed many utilitarian terms from Urdu and Gujarati, such as “jugaad”, and even “jungle”. But as multiple schools across the country’s rural areas transition towards becoming English or Hindi medium schools, they actually have dire implications — undermining not only the diversity that India advocates but also much of its youth that has only ever grown-up speaking languages such as Konkani or Odia.

About a hundred years ago, Lord Macaulay claimed that a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia. We’d like to assume that we’ve come a long way since then, but have we really? Post-colonial India faces a multitude of challenges: tensions in foreign policy, economic development and even the government census. Yet, arguably, the most concerning of these deep-seated issues is the one of precarious linguistic equity. About eight decades into Independence, one encounters an entirely different version of the same language every 8 kilometres from one geographical point to another, which is remarkable; and should not be deemed inconsequential, or cemented over with monolingualism.

With the eradication of multilingualism, it is imperative that we do not forget our roots, the languages that have brought our cultures and civilisations to where we are today. As the requirement for most employment is the ability to converse fluently in the more commonly spoken languages such as English, Hindi, or Mandarin, it drastically erodes the use and application of many vernaculars, especially among the youth. This erosion occurs, not simply because of a reluctance to communicate in these languages, but due to an array of socioeconomic factors which range from the lack of government support, to stigmatisation towards the community that speaks it. Eventually, this leads a language down the path of being dead and unpragmatic, first as only being read, and slowly fading out of society entirely.

The prevalence of English dominated platforms and content on the internet and social media can influence language preferences. The digital divide is also a significant part of the issue, as English dictated technology becomes more accessible, contributing to a preference for English by those who are proficient in the language. Furthermore, its global impact is evident on the different digital platforms, and this associates it with trends, influencers and pop culture. This synchronisation with contemporary global factors might make the younger generation prefer English in their online interactions, which would thus cause a continuous drop in vernacular language usage.

Another caveat with the waning influence of regional languages is the fact that many of these communities exist as diaspora, and are unable to maintain a connection with their native language. In the Indian context, migration is largely rural to urban ‘distress’ migration, meaning that subjects of this migration often come from financially and socially weaker backgrounds. Since the subjects of this migration largely come from financially weaker backgrounds, there’s a stigma attached to their culture and especially their language. Regrettably, this leads to widespread adoption of dominant languages within migrants, owing to both practical and social/caste reasons.

Education is a critical tool when empowering the youth of a developing nation such as ours, and when the medium of said education is English or Hindi over vernaculars, the younger generation has no incentive to pursue their vernaculars, leaving the language with the previous generation. This leads to its eventual demise. This is especially prevalent in post-colonised places such as South America, where the entire culture of the locals was wiped out by the Spanish colonisers, including dozens of languages. The real demerit of the eradication of vernaculars is that it is nothing less than disregarding the hundreds of years of shared community knowledge these vernaculars represent.

(Continued on Page 3)
Die Welt in Chandhbagh

Dhairya Khanna

Im Morgenlicht, so sanft und fein,
танзен Blumen im Sonnenschein.
Vögel singen, die Frühlings lacht,
die Natur ist farbenpracht.

Unter Himmel so blau,
bleibt die Zeit im Morgentau.
Ein Feld im goldenen Abendlicht,
ein Lied der Harmonie, so leicht.

Wenn die Sonne sanft versinkt,
und der Abend seine Schatten winkt.
Die Welt schläft unter Sternenschein,
ein Traum, so rein und so fein.

Chandbagh: Español y Sonrisas

Ms Neha Rawat

En Chandbagh jugamos, bajo el sol nos encontramos,
Maestros y alumnos, juntos aprendemos y nos amamos.
Hablamos en español, con risas y emoción,
Exploramos el idioma, ¡qué bonita sensación!

Los más pequeños dicen “hola” con emoción,
Los mayores se escinden, ¡qué travesura, qué diversión!
Soy la maestra de español, con alegría en el corazón,
En Chandbagh, la magia está en cada rincón.

Mis alumnos confían en mí, me llenan de gratitud,
Comparten sus sueños, ¡qué maravillosa virtud!
En Chandbagh, la armonía es nuestra canción,
Maestros y alumnos, juntos, formamos una hermosa unión!

UNQUOTABLE QUOTES

The next school is college beta.
SHA, timetabling life.
Give the laundry to the CDH bhaiya.
Ved Chichra, no wonder the food tastes different.
Get admitted to the library.
Agniv Achariya, unparelled work-ethic.
The wedding was so good, I felt like a bride.
Kavya Singh, stealing the show.
I oued him today.
ViraJ Rastogi, Howwazzat What was that?
Do I look better from tomorrow?
ViraJ Agarwal, back to the future.
It is not wrong, it is incorrect.
Kabir Gandhi, right on.
Mathematics is more about art than about mathematics.
Aadi Kandele, a beautiful mind.

A LEGACY OF SERVICE

The following are the appointments for the year 2024-25:

Study Council: Shashwat Singh
Technology Council: Kabir Chawla
Pastoral Council: Rohan Kailath
Mess Committee: Reyansh Agarwal
Games Committee: Rohan Jalan

We wish them a fruitful tenure!

Around the World in 80 Words

The USA vetoed a UN resolution calling for a cease-fire in Gaza amid the Israel-Hamas war. Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny died. A commercial U.S. moonlander, Odyssey, landed on the Moon for the first time in 51 years. At the British Academy Film Awards, Oppenheimer won the Best Film Award and Cillian Murphy won the Best Actor Award. The Kansas City Chiefs defeated the San Francisco 49ers, winning the Super Bowl. Kylian Mbappe signed a 5-year contract with Real Madrid.

Spies in Disguise

Vihaan Lakhotia
respectively, are now being resurrected scripted in Punjabi and Tamil in Punjab and Tamil Nadu, previously in Hindi. Signposts and billboards in languages such as English or Tamil are trying to ameliorate the situation. Many civil examinations, notably the UPSC and the IPSE, are now available to be attempted in various vernaculars.

The New Education Policy 2020 (NEP) emphasises the significance of regional languages, and supports Language Technology Research centres, focusing on developing computing in Indian languages. Although there are many obstacles in the way of resolving these issues, every little step in the right direction is a victory to be proud of.

landmark and vernaculars carry.
The legacy of the founding Masters and Headmasters of Doon is deeply rooted in the institution’s visionary concept of an ‘Aristocracy of Service’. A.E. Foot, the founding Headmaster, crafted STAes and SUPWs to provide a holistic education for students. These activities, particularly Juniors, provide a platform for working with experienced professionals in their fields and preparing them for college events. However, the trend of diversification of interests has led to a loss of depth of skill and the importance of specialization in college applications. This has resulted in a lack of commitment to Club and Society meetings, which have become less of a prestige and dangerously more digitalized.
Matri Bhasa

Mr Samik Das

Our mother tongue does not demand any attention from us; it just stays with us in our joy and sorrow, as fluid as emotion itself. Mother and child are two different manifestations of the same feeling — love. So is bhasa and matri bhasa, intertwined in expressions and silence.
Dear Editor,

I write in response to the articles titled ‘The Murder of Humanity’ and ‘India’s Political Kaleidoscope’ in Issue No. 2697 of The Doon School Weekly. I feel that in recent times, it has become a rather common occurrence for someone to remind the Editorial Board of the Weekly what role it plays in the School Community, and today that responsibility falls on me.

The Weekly has always served as a publication which has been run by Doscos, and for Doscos. It has served as a platform for students to write articles about recent developments in School, or when students feel change needs to come through. Going through past Weeklies in the Archives, one realises the role of the Weekly in chronicling Doscos’ lives through the decades. During World War II, the budget for the Weekly was diverted to support Britain’s war effort. As a result, for a good part of the war years, we know little of what life might have been like for Doscos during those grim times. This clearly shows the importance of the role of the Weekly as our chronicler. However, over time, this publication has changed into one that discusses issues which do not immediately affect the School Community as a whole. It has become a medium for members of the community to portray their views about faith or to discuss upcoming political elections.

While I respect both authors’ sentiments and feelings, the Weekly is not a place to express these views. We have other publications which serve this purpose such as the Circle which discusses historical events and new political happenings. We

saw Brigadier Ashok Abbey visit School and discuss mountaineering, particularly on how The Doon School has played an important role in shaping Indian mountaineering. I, for one, was surprised to hear that our School had such a major role in shaping mountaineering in India. It is evident that the School Community is unaware about the history, culture, and legacy of the place in which they spend six years. At one point in time, the Weekly used to be a publication with School-centric topics. However, I can’t say the same about the present-day state of the publication. Regardless, I respect all members of the Editorial Board, as I know how much hard work and dedication is needed to release a six-page publication every Saturday.

I request my fellow readers not to read this Letter to the Editor coming from someone who has been aggrieved. Rather, I suggest you read it as a reminder to the Board of the Weekly and the entire School Community. Throughout this letter, I have reiterated that the Weekly is no longer as School-centric as it should be. While it is slowly reverting to its original form, with a recent article about the tutoring system, it can definitely pull its socks much higher. We, as members of the Community must help the publication revive the culture we once had in this glorious institution.

Regards,

Samarveer Bisen
Forever In Our Hearts

The Weekly bids farewell to Mr Dinesh Chandra Bhatkoti

I met Mr Bhatkoti a few days before he passed away. He was his usual cheerful self and was full of energy. He was passing by and decided to drop in on campus and say hello. We stood outside the Main Building under the sun and were admiring the beauty of Chandbagh together. I am still to come to terms with his sudden demise.

He served the school for over three decades and was a mentor and role model not only to his students but also to many of the Masters. As a young Master, I recall going to him, often for advice and mentoring. DCB was someone who always loved his surroundings and as an environmentalist he related to the outdoors more than anything else. He was a reservoir of knowledge regarding various plants and trees on campus.

He will always be remembered as a gentle and warm hearted person. He was always accessible to the boys and was a good listener. He had a calming effect on all. I had the privilege of working closely with him for almost two decades and also lived in his neighbourhood on campus for many years. He will be truly missed by everyone whose life he touched. My prayers and thoughts are with his family and loved ones.

-An excerpt from a tribute by Arjun Kamdar, ex 701-O, Issue No. 2392,

Our School has lost a great teacher — DCB sir, but his legacy will continue to live on through his students. Sir was always full of compassion and dedicated his life towards helping all on the campus. I vividly remember when I joined School, he used to narrate to me the glorious history and ethos of our school. I usually saw Sir moving with his “snake catching stick” especially in the evening. He was a walking encyclopedia on the flora and fauna of Chandbagh. DCB sir led a very simple life but his sheer presence was a profound impact on the students and colleagues of his time.

May his soul rest in peace. A loss to many of us, a great human being and a fabulous teacher, we will miss you DCB sir.

-PKD
The Week

Arjun Prakash

As we approach the final stretch of these cold winter months, I hope you’ve been able to find solace in the heart of the moment — or as in my case, Sunday afternoons under my blanket watching Kohli montages in an attempt to find inspiration. They say one man’s pleasure is another man’s poison, but in the case of a gloomy day in Chandbagh, we’re all just victims of unnecessary koflet trips to the Wellness Centre. On the topic of troubling temperatures — I’ve heard that being a weatherman is a difficult job. Predictions, predictions, I’ve heard that being a weatherman is a difficult job. Predictions, predictions, and more predictions. In recent news, however, the weather channel has been revised songs, and that one Junior who you lads, don’t let the first innings fool you, for it isn’t over till it’s over. The fresh smell of fallen leaves, revised songs, and that one Junior who just cannot sit straight — Spring Term Assemblies in the Rose Bowl never cease to instil a sense of peace within me, although recently, the murmurs of certain private going public have set alight a policy of Zero Tuck-tolerance. Amidst the choc-talk however, the the Inter-House Cricket competition has been keeping the Juniors and now Mediums teams awake at night, with nail-biting finishes drawing a decent number of board class spectators towards the pristine Main Field as they make the ‘walk of contemplation’ from the makeshift exam hall to their respective Houses. Word of advice for you lads, don’t let the first innings fool you, for it isn’t over till it’s over. The fresh smell of fallen leaves, revised songs, and that one Junior who just cannot sit straight — Spring Term

Crossword | Languages

Across
6. ‘War and Peace’ by Leo Tolstoy was originally written in this language.
7. This is written from right to left, and the script is cursive, meaning letters are connected to each other.
8. The only language in the world whose status as a UNESCO World Heritage Language has been officially recognized.

Down
1. This language is known for its unique writing system, which includes three scripts: Kanji, Hiragana, and Katakana.
2. This language has its own unique system of counting, with different words used for different types of objects.
3. This the official language of international diplomacy and is used in organizations like the United Nations.
4. This language is written in the Latin alphabet, but it was traditionally written in the Arabic script.
6. Infamous for ‘compound words’, where multiple words are combined to form a single word

Source: https://www.theteacherscorner.net/make-your-own/crossword/