

Impact of Globalization on Assamese Language: An Analysis

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Introduction: Globalization is one of the widely used words in the present scenario. In simple sense, the term globalization denotes the worldwide process of interconnectedness which can be made through different means specially by the modern technological and communication tools. According to Saji Thomas, “ the term globalization used to describe the private capital flow across by different means”.¹ Historically speaking, the concept of globalization emerged in the last decades of the seventeenth century and received prominence in the closing decade of the previous century. Most importantly, the notion of globalization has impacted all major sectors of human life including our language too. Hence, the present chapter is designed to shed some lights on the various impacts of globalization on Assamese language, one of the widely speaking languages of the Indian State of Assam and enlisted in the eighth schedule of the Constitution of India.

Methodology: Methodology of this paper is qualitative in nature based on different books, journals and articles. Similarly, different websites have also been visited for preparing the present paper. Importantly, the present study has been carried out through descriptive method.

Objective: The present paper aims to access the various impacts of globalization on Assamese language. Moreover, it is also aimed to shed some lights on the influence of other languages in Assamese language owing to globalization

Scope of the study: The study deals with the change occurred in Assamese language specially in the vocabulary and conversation of new generation Assamese speakers.

Discussion; It is widely known that the process of globalization got accelerated in our country specially after the initiation of Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization process following the instruction of International Monetary fund and World Bank in the 9th decade of the previous century. Importantly, this process of globalization has impacted at-most all major sectors of the India and Assam as well. ² If we deeply observe post 1990 period of our society then one thing can easily be noticed that language, culture and other such vital issues of our day to day life are being impacted by the process of globalization to a great extent. It is generally argued that United States of America is the epicenter of the vulnerability of languages. American linguistic norms as we all know have impacted the English language followed by other major languages of the world. This phenomenon has created a major debate in the academic lexicon of the world. Importantly, different marginal and local languages have also automatically become the victim of US centric linguistic hegemony. ³

Needless to say the imitation character of the people of Assam in general and in particular to the upcoming generation of our society. The growing trend of the dilution of Assamese language has emerged as a major challenge before the Assamese language, one of the oldest languages belonging to the Indo- Aryan language family. It has been a widely accepted norm that spread of modern information technology specially those related to mass media and social media has impacted a lot in the native or regional languages like Assamese. Such impacts can be seen both in positive as well as negative manner. In this connection, both positive and negative impacts of globalization on Assamese language have been discussed below.

By virtue of globalization the native peoples of Assam specially, the new generation has got the access to learn many languages. This results in the emergence of the prevalence of many languages in lieu of one common language. Moreover, increasing tendency of showing interest in foreign language specially English language has impacted our native Assamese language to a great extent. Apart from English, use of the words from other languages like Hindi, Bengali and other such language in Assamese conversation has heavily impacted Assamese language. Prevalence of such language can widely be termed as jargon, argot, slang and contemporary colloquial in the linguistic terminology. In the same line, it can be observed that the new generation prefers to change their way of talking or conversation frequently as per that change

occurred in their respective code switching or code mixing. In short, such developments have brought a new trend in the contemporary scenario of Assamese language.

The present discourse of the impact of globalization on Assamese language would be incomplete if we skip the phonological, morphological, lexical and syntactical dimensions.

Phonological impact of globalization on Assamese language:

- (1) In standard Assamese language certain words are uttered as 'Xo' or 'So' and so on. ⁴However, it has been widely seen that the present generation prefers to utter these words like 'Cho'. For example, Sarma is widely used as *Chorma*, Sivasagar is uttered as *Cibasagar*, Das is widely uttered as *Dach*.etc.
- (2) Generally, the phoneme of 'a' isn't twice used in a sentence wherein it is located very near to each other. However, due to the impact of globalization, such norms have been seen as diluted today and two 'a's are widely used in contemporary speakers of Assamese language specially those belonging to the new generation. For instance, Indian currency rupee is termed as '*toka*' in Assamese language from the time immemorial, but now a days, speakers of Assamese language doesn't not seen hesitating using '*taka*' which is used in Bengali language in place of Assamese term '*toka*'
- (3) Due to the impact of globalization some Assamese words without having Phoneme cluster like '*thapar*' (implying slap in English) are now used as '*thappar*' as used in Bengali and Hindi language.

Lexical Impact:

People belonging to new generation or the common people are seen being using certain words which have getting popularities not only in urban or semi-urban areas but also and most importantly, such practices now spread to the rural areas too. However, such words are still to be merged with Assamese language as listening these words in Assamese conversation raised eyebrows in the experts of Assamese language. For example, now a day's people highly used the words like *saff* (used in Hindi denoting to clean) in place of "*Chaff*" in Assamese. Similarly, now a day's words from other Indian languages like

mamuli (implying normal or common), *gaddari* (implying betrayal) '*pakka*' (denoting certain or definite) have widely been used in Assamese language.

In a nutshell, it can be opined that growing trend of globalization has negatively impacted a lot in Assamese language and it has created a kind of chaos in Assamese language. However, it would be an exaggeration to say that globalization has posed only negative influence in Assamese language. Truly speaking, it can also be observed that the notion of globalization has also positive impact on Assamese language too. In this connection, following issues can be taken into consideration.

- **Science and Technology and Assamese language:** Globalization is highly associated with the development of modern science and technology. By virtue of globalization. Now a day's encyclopedia in Assamese language on various subjects including science and technology has been possible.
- **Communication, Assamese language and Social Media:** Globalization and Social Media can be considered as the both sides of a same coin. Importantly, now a day's the tendency of using Assamese script in social media platforms such as what's app, facebook etc has been rapidly increasing and getting popularized among the younger generations. Here, we can cite the name of some technological applications such as *Google Indic app, Rodali, Lipikar, Lachit* and many others.
- **Internalization of Assamese language:** By virtue of globalization, Assamese language has been getting internationalized to a great extent and role of different technological and communicational tools is quite vital in this regards.
- **Digital preservation of Assamese texts and access to online reading of Assamese literatures:** It has been generally argued that the strength of Assamese readers are gradually diminishing owing to different causes. However, this over simplified and over generalized allegation has been met to a satisfactory level in the present era of globalization. For example, now a day's any reader of Assamese texts residing in any corners of the globe can read his or her preferred Assamese literature because of the provisions like digital preservation of Assamese texts and access to online reading of Assamese literatures. It becomes possible only because of globalization.

- **Globalization and developing multilingual tendency:** Another importance of globalization in terms of linguistic scenario of the globe is that it develops the tendency of multilingual identity or quest for learning different language by the readers. Such practices not only meet the academic or intellectual needs of the readers but also help in building universal brotherhood.

In short, it can be remarked that Assamese language is benefited by the current trend and the process of globalization to a large extent.

Conclusion: To concluding the present discourse on impact of globalization on Assamese language, we may opine that the process as well as the norms of globalization has influenced all over all segments of human life including the linguistic one too. In case of Assamese language, one of the official languages of the State of Assam, India the impact of globalization is quite vivid. The process, norms and practice of globalization have impacted Assamese language through various means having both positive and negative dimensions. However, we can remark that it is the high time to avoid the negative influence of globalization over our own and beloved Assamese language and to accept the positive ones to our level best for making Assamese language as one of the more powerful, bountiful and prosperous language of the globe.

Notes and References

¹ Gogoi, Purandar (2016) International Relations. Banalata, Dibrugarh.p.216

² Hakacham, Upen Rabha (2014) *Asamiya aru Asamar Bhasa-Upabhasa* (Assamese and the Languages and Dialects in Assam). Jyoti Prakashan. Guwahati.p.418

³ Ibid.

⁴ Retrived from www.wikipedia.com/ Assamese Alphabet on 20/01/2010 On 5.40 PM (IST)