

The Role of Newspapers Today with Special Reference to Odia Dailies

Abstract: *Newspapers are a part of every house hold. They have become as much indispensable as say, for example a mobile phone or a television. They play a crucial role in an individual's life in providing the latest information about almost every thing happening around us. They try to give us as detailed information as possible thereby keeping us abreast of the time. Newspapers are popular every where and with every body- be it in rural place or urban and be it the rich or the poor. This is so for the simple reason that they are quite cheap and easily available. One more important reason why people subscribe to papers is the language besides of course giving the facts and figures.*

Introduction:

Newspapers use language unique to this field media or to be more specific, print media in its attempt to keep us informed about what is going on around us. It uses a specific type of language unique to the area only. Some areas employ one specific type of language to fit into the format called registers. We have thus the register of law, register of defense, register of administration etc.

Newspapers and Linguistic Competency:

One of the major concerns of the present project is to find out what is special about the language of the print media with special reference to Odia daily newspapers. It was discovered that the print media or Odia newspapers for that matter use a distinct language. It affects our linguistic competency. It affects our linguistic behavior either by modernizing our existing knowledge in terms of new words, usage, expressions etc. or by other means such as loan words, loan translation, loan blend etc. Newspapers affect our lives as far as our linguistic competencies are concerned to a considerable extent. It in fact enriches our existing repertoire of vocabulary knowledge by giving new and other words. Thus, for example, we get to know about words such as 'chairperson' in stead of 'chairman' or 'road rage' or 'i-mate' or 'walkathon' etc.

History of Print Media in Odisha:

On close examination of the history of newspapers in Odisha, we will find that the first Odia newspaper of Odisha *Utkal Dipika* came into being in 1866 under the able supervision of Gauri Shankar Rai, one of the pioneers of Odia literature. This paper remained in circulation within

the province of Odisha for close to seventy years. It was followed by the publication of several magazines such as *Balasore Sambad Bahika*, *Sambalpur Hitaisani*, *Utkal Prana*, *Indrabhanu*, *Bijuli*, *Utkal Sanhitya* etc. Odisha started her first daily newspaper Asha in the year 1928. Thus the people of Odisha became aware of the power of the media through some of the more famous Odia daily newspapers such as *the Samaj*, *the Sambad*, *the Prajatantra*, *the Pragatibadi*, etc.

Newspapers and Culture:

All these newspapers directly or indirectly influence the culture, social life and language of the Odia people. The language of any state is modernized mainly through newspapers. So also Odia language is modernized through Odia newspapers. In an attempt to disseminate latest and current information, the newspaper writers make use of contemporary and new words and usage equivalence of which are not available. Thus, we as readers are exposed to new and latest entries and gain in terms of our vocabulary expansion.

Generally speaking, the newspapers are law abiding. They are not always free to express what ever they like. The freedom of newspapers comes under the press freedom. Freedom of the press comes under the freedom of speech and expression of Art.19 (a) of the Indian Constitution. The existence of free press in our country is a tribute to the Indian democracy. The news media with its multilingual network can inform, instruct, evaluate and generate a healthy and constructive public opinion. It enlivens the process of change and progress on the administrative advancement of their fundamental rights. Free press is a forum where the weaker sections of the society including the minorities, backward classes, women and others can express their opinion. Democracy needs such a medium in order to regulate plans and programmes of the ruling party or the party in power.

Conclusion:

Newspapers play a crucial role in enhancing our vocabulary encompassing all areas of life. They also enhance our linguistic competencies in addition to making us aware of what is happening around us. It is no denying the fact that we become aware of the register of law, register of defense, register of administration etc. through newspapers. It will also be an understatement to say that newspapers affect our linguistic behavior either by modernizing our existing knowledge in terms of new words, usage, expressions etc. or by other means such as loan words, loan translation, loan blend etc. For example, we get to know about words such as 'chairperson' in stead of 'chairman' or 'road rage' or 'i-mate' or 'walkathon' etc.

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