

The New Age Lingo !

I was at my *Karma Bhumi* — my clinic. Monsoon is a healthy season for doctors (others' ill-health brings wealth to us). I was amidst a busy outpatient clinic with howling kids who were coughing ceaselessly, and I was unable to think of names of any more cough syrups to 'ink' as I had exhausted them all. Apparently none of my patients were getting better and I was trying to reassure them with a holistic prescription of warm honey water, steam inhalation and gargles.

The flip side of being a pediatrician is that one needs to treat the child's body and the parents' state-of-mind, simultaneously. The positive side is that children with their innocent eyes and smiles always win your heart and let you forget the pitfalls of our profession.

A young couple entered my room with their newborn baby. After years of practice, most of the time a good clinician can make a spot diagnosis just by the facial expressions and body language of the patient. I started with my routine history taking and was perturbed for a brief moment when they addressed me by my first name "So Shilpa how frequently should I nurse my baby, how many hours of sleep my baby needs". They had a big list of questions on their tablet device, which made me feel as if I was giving some exam viva. They had already done R and D (research and development) or a PHD on child rearing, and were intermittently quoting *gyaan* from many parenting blogs that they subscribed to. To my utter disbelief, I was enlightened about the fact that there were even separate groups for moms subcategorized as breast feeding moms, weaning moms, and then there were separate dads group. I was certainly not feeling good being addressed by my first name...it might be a common practice in the West or in the corporate world, but definitely not in my fraternity. I realized that I had post graduated now from *doctor saheb* to 'Doc' to 'Shilpa'! Also the lovey dovey couple were addressing each other as baby, and I was getting confused which "baby" actually needed my expertise?

While I somehow managed to put up a pleasant face and eagerly waited to see the next patient with a sigh of relief – I was mistaken.

Entered a trio – a lanky teenager with his parents, who were still dressed up in their corporate office wear. I assumed that they had probably rushed directly from

their workplace. On questioning what was wrong with the boy, his mother in an authoritative tone prodded her son "you speak for yourself and tell the doctor what's wrong with you"

"Doc am feeling blue", said the young boy (why not grey or any other colour I wondered, also blue for us means a medical emergency – code blue). However, he looked pink and stable. Meanwhile the parents were busy on their cell phones while I was trying to "decode" their blue child.

The third patient, a middle aged woman with her four-year-old toddler, entered my cabin and burst out in a loud tone: "He is hot". Who and where I thought ("hot -"my heart leapt to see the hot hunk). Nope my child is hot (oh, my child is running a high temperature is replaced by HOT). Then came, he poops whole day with a thunderous noise (he is having gas or loose motion).

The last patient was the ultimate – a stout lady in the trademark red lipstick, attired in heavily embroidered Kurti and ironed hair as if she had come to attend some wedding - entered my cabin. I almost felt ashamed of my haggard state. "Dr. Shilpa, he is nowadays playing with his ball while passing urine. So what – take the ball away when he goes to the washroom, I said candidly. No doctor, he presses it too! I felt stupid for the earlier remark. With great difficulty and my staff holding him, I managed to examine the child's genitals and then counselled the mother!

At last I finished my clinic and returned home, unable to still comprehend why people don't put the right words in their mouth nowadays. I asked my teenage son how was his day at school today? No reply. I prodded again...silence. I turned my face towards him to ask for the third time when I saw that thumbs up sign. So now there were no words in the mouth' but only sign language. God, give me the ability to stay calm!

I was about to start my dinner when my younger one was talking to someone on the phone and as a typical Indian mother, I could not resist to eavesdrop. "Hey Nish! Yepp Yepp I'll get it to school, No way I m not gonna say thatc ya Love ya"

That's it – this was the final straw. I called out her name and came the answer "Mom I will be back in a jiffy"!!

I tried to eat my food without biting my tongue.

My phone beeped, it was my resident doctor from the hospital whom I had asked to give an update of an indoor patient. The message read as follows:

Vx Tw, LM on, Sping more, 623 pt F9.

I had to try again hard to read this encrypted message!

Vomited twice, loose motion on, sleeping more, 623 patient is fine!

Alas!!

Moss, Mercked, SMH (shake my head), swag (cool), Doe (though), FOMO (fear of missing out), and many more – this is the new teenage lingo, and if you fail to comprehend these, you belong to seventeenth century BC

or you are too old and out of place. Infants and toddlers learn nowadays a new alphabet A apple B blackberry F Facebook T Twitter and so on. Wren and Martin textbook of grammar might gather dust in old libraries. Shakespeare and Wordsworth thankfully are not alive today to hear this English changed to “Slangish” and for Indians often “Hinglish” where words like *Karofy* (to do), *Hilaing* (shaking), *dokogenic* (giving stress) are part of our national language.

I graced myself, trying to stay serene and wondering what will be the future of our literate era.

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