

Groovy* is not Cool Anymore

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"Ma, teacher onek *para* ditase homework kori nay bole" (Ma my teacher is giving me a lot of 'para' because I didn't submit my homework), says your school going kid one day. What is 'para' (the 'a' pronounced as in pan or pancake) you may think— some new form of detention? Actually, close enough — 'para' in current jargon means 'pain' or 'grief'. In other words when someone is giving you 'para' or 'grief' it means they are being difficult and basically a royal pain. This seems to sum up 95 percent of a teenager's life which is plagued by some sort of 'para' from some sort of authority. The remaining 5 percent is pretty much 'awesome'.

English words have been part of our jargon since British times and are unlikely to go away. In fact new ones are added everyday. The word 'available' which in English means easily obtainable, is frequently used in informal Bangla — 'Akhon college admission er shomoy ghush nawa akkebare abelable' (Taking bribes for college admissions is totally 'available') where available means a common practice.

'Akdom dhila public' means a totally ineffectual person — the word 'public' being used as a singular noun and 'dhila' which means loose used as a word for useless. 'Kono ishteshon (station) nai' refers to something that is totally illogical and describing someone as GMTT (*jate matal tale thik*) is a reference to someone who chooses to be mental or sensible according to their convenience.

Whether we are talking about English or Bangla, new colloquial words and expressions have crept in, leaving us oldies baffled and a little 'parafied' ourselves.

Technology and innovation have also changed language in significant ways. We know by now that when the IT people are talking about viruses and hackers and malicious domains — they are not talking about parasites and axe-wielding psychopaths and deathtraps set by enemy forces.

By now we are all used to expressions like 'Have you ever googled yourself?' or when you are asking for some information your colleague will glibly say: 'Oh just wiki it' making you want to retort 'Why don't you go wiki it yourself?'

But think about deciphering a comment like: "I'm a *newbie* in snap chatting, I prefer hanging out with my *peeps*, yeah sometimes even with the *rents* is *sweet*." Decoded: I am new at 'snap chatting', I prefer being physically present with my friends as opposed to virtual mingling and even sometimes with the parents which can be (surprisingly) nice. Snap chatting, in case you newbies didn't know, is to chat with friends by sending pictures, videos and comments that disintegrate in a few seconds to avoid future embarrassment.

The Smart Phone App (application) generation in fact, speaks in even more cryptic language. They will use all kinds of hieroglyphics called emoticons using images and punctuation that indicate emotion or



state of being in their message: :) (smiley face) :) (smiley face or double chin) 8D (big grin with glasses), >:((frown) and I-o (bored) to name a few. There will also be abbreviations deliberately used to throw off parents when they are trying to read their child's conversation over the shoulder. You thought you had figured out lol (laugh out loud) and ROFL (Rolling on the floor laughing). Did you know these: HBU (How about you?), wuh (whatever), JK (just kidding), ORL (Oh really?), SMH (Shaking my head in incredulity) and POS (parents over shoulder)— the last one an indication that you should move away now and MYOB i.e. mind your own business. :\$ (blushing with embarrassment).

*Groovy which used to mean fashionable and hip is now a computer programming language. (sigh)