**A critical discourse analysis of ideologies and themes in children’s cartoons and their influence upon kids**

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**Abstract**

This paper examines the role of media especially cartoons in influencing the social and psychological lives of children. It is an attempt to explore the amount of influence it has on the tender, impressionable minds of children. This study seeks to understand ‘what exactly are children watching when they turn on Cartoon network or Disney channel etc?’ Given that they have round-the-clock access to such programming, which are often rerun, what *are* the over-arching themes present in today’s cartoon landscape? What messages are Pakistani children absorbing via the content of children’s television channels? In this respect the following research questions are formulated.

* What are the dominant ideologies and themes presented in children’s cartoons?
* In what ways, positive or negative, these ideologies and themes affect Pakistani children?

Cartoons having an important influence upon kids and attraction for them, may explicitly or explicitly propagate such content through linguistic and non-linguistic devices which create gender, culture, class, power based ideologies; violent, offensive or problematic behaviors and religious concepts among kids.

For the research purpose, 90 minutes recordings of three popular cartoon series are analyzed from semiotic and linguistic perspectives i.e ‘Doraemon’, ‘Chota Bheem’ and ‘Horrid Henry’. Analysis is based on Fairclough’s critical discourse theory. To support the view that how implicit and explicit ideologies are overpowering Pakistani children on cognitive level, in the second phase, 30 children (8-10 years old) are interviewed on a semi structured questionnaire. Findings provide a peep into the inner thoughts of children and explain their general behavior towards the world at large that they start structuring the concepts of power in terms of gender, class distinction and overpowering and submissive behaviors.

*Key words: Media Language, Critical Discourse Analysis, Cartoons*