CHAPTER II

THE ORIGINS OF ARYAN SPEECH:
AN INTRODUCTION TO
SRI AUROBINDO’S LINGUISTIC THEORY
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II.1. Introduction

The problem that the origin of human speech is unsolved, is the one thing on which all linguists are fully agreed. Several attempts have been made to answer the question – how did language originate? Much attention has been put to solve this problem, several theories with regard to this have been provided, the problem has been looked upon from different angles and view-points, yet it is a major question that the science of language seeks to answer.

Ancient people thought much and widely about the origin of language. Many considered it not a human invention but a divine gift. To the Egyptians the creator of speech was Toth; the Babylonians believed that their language was received form the god Nabû. In the Indian tradition the goddess Sarasvatī is the inventress of Sanskrit, which is not only the original human tongue (of which all others are corruptions), but also the language of the gods themselves. Tamil is said to be a gift of Śiva to the people of South India. The Hebrew writers of the genesis narrative observed that language is the most significant gift that god has bestowed on man. The Bible says that ‘the Word was God’. Modern linguists having brushed aside these statements, thought
language to be man-made and have tried to discover various theories of its origin.\(^1\) There are others who describe language to be purely a human art. Some even believe that it is both divine and human.\(^2\) Max Muller once remarked: "We cannot tell as yet what language is. It may be a production of nature, a work of human art, or a divine gift. But to whatever sphere it belongs, it would seem to stand unsurpassed – nay, unequalled in it – by anything else. If it be a production of nature, it is her last and crowning production, which she reserved for man alone. If it be a work of human art, it would seem to lift the human artist almost to a level of divine creator. If it be the gift of god, it is god's greatest gift; for through it god spoke to man and man speaks to god in worship.

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\(^1\) The theories put forward by the modern philologists with regard to the origin of language are as follows.

(a) The 'Bow-wow' theory, otherwise called onomatopoeic theory is based on the supposition that language arose in imitation of the sounds occurring in nature.

(b) The 'Ding-dong' or pathogenic or nativistic theory sustains that there is a mystic correlation between sound and meaning.

(c) The 'Pooh-pooh' theory is to the effect that language at first consisted of ejaculation of surprise, fear, pleasure, pain etc.

(d) The 'yo-he-ho' theory, also called Noire's theory, holds that language arose from grunts of physical exertion.

(e) The 'Sing-song' theory supposes that language took birth from primitive inarticulate chants.

(f) The 'Tata' theory maintains that language comes from imitation of bodily movements.

(g) Darwin held the view that language was, in origin, nothing but mouth 'pantomime' in which the vocal organs unconsciously attempted to mimic gestures by the hands.

(h) E.H. Sturtevant presents a novel theory where he says that language must have been invented for the purpose of lying or deceiving. Similarly there are also various other theories like 'Gesture theory', 'Contact theory' etc.

\(^2\) Cf. "The origin of language is divine in the same sense in which man's nature, with all its capacities and acquirements, physical and moral, is a divine creation; it is human, in that it is brought about through that nature by human instrumentality." Whitney, *Language and the Study of Language*, p. 400
prayer, and meditations." There has been nothing final with regard to the origin of language. The Western scholars have looked upon this question—How language must have originated—in different ways. But results have always been disappointing, not leading to some sure regions where, at least, one can find some support. It so happened that in 1886 and 1911 the Linguistic Society of Paris banned papers concerning the origin of language. Nevertheless, man's interest in this subject continues unabated.

The modern linguists as well as psychologists attempt to provide some answers to the questions related to the origin of language by approaching the problem differently. Among all the hypotheses available at present one prominent hypothesis is the natural selection approach. This claims that speech was selected by gradual natural selection of genetic changes, made possible by the selective advantage of speech itself or by genetic assimilation. Another prominent approach is that of Noam Chomsky. He says that all children have a language acquiring device that uses innate universal grammar. The argument of this hypothesis is that syntactical skills are novel to human communication, arising in each variety of human language from parameters set in an innate universal grammar. Some believe in the

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3 Lectures on the Science of Language, 1962, p. 3
5 For details see: N. Chomsky, Syntactic Structures, Mouton, The Hague, 1957; Language and the Problems of Knowledge, MIT, Cambridge, 1988
memetic origin of language. This hypothesis is based on the idea that the origin of speech lies in man's ability to sing. Some others advocate the 'Motor theory' of language origin and function. There has been a good amount of research in this field and the exponents of this motor control research unanimously agree that the motor programming and speech programming are inseparably related. However, a glance at the recent advances in neuro-science, cognitive science, speech physiology, paleontology, primatology, linguistics and related fields, shows that much has been attempted and achieved with regard to the question - What is the Origin of Language? Yet there has been no answer which can satisfy to a greater extent.


7 According to this 'Motor Theory', language originated as a transfer from or translation of the elements and system of combination of elements of the neural motor system. This theory proposes that the original structures of word-forms were derived from the neural processes linking perception and action. In this way a theory of this kind fits well with the current trend of research into neural motor control and the neural basis of perception. (For details, see: Languages of the Brain by K.H. Pribram, New Jersey, 1971).

8 The following research works are significant with regard to the role of motor control system in the origin of language.
   (a) The Physical Foundation of Language, R.M.Allott, Secaford, 1973
   (b) Brain Mechanism Underlying Speech and Language, Edited by C.H.Millikan and F.A.Darley, New York, 1981
   (c) The Neural Basis of Motor Control, V.B.Brooks, Oxford University Press, Londin, 1986
II.2. *Sri Aurobindo's Approach*

Sri Aurobindo’s ideas about the origin of language are a synthesis of the divine, the human and the evolutionary theories. To him the ultimate source of human speech was the divine reality. He says, “The language of man is not framed on earth, but in heaven, as indeed are all things that the earth-soul uses in this mortal journey.”9 But Sri Aurobindo also recognised the role played by man in the process: “It [Language] diversely developed by the more discursive but less sure-footed agencies of intellectual mind...” Then he confirms: “Therefore mankind has one original language based on certain eternal types of sounds developed by certain laws of rhythmic variation, perfectly harmonious and symmetrical in its structure and evolution.”10

Modern philologists also have agreed on the existence of a parent tongue as the source of all languages. They have called it Primitive or Proto-Indo-European. They have followed various methods to reconstruct this parent tongue.11 Yet it has failed to show the origin of language and to establish the laws and processes governing the development and growth of language.

Sri Aurobindo calls the original language *Devabhāṣā*,12 and says that this original language was spoken of in the *Satyayuga*. The *Satyayuga*

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9 Sri Aurobindo, *SABCL.*, Vol. 11, p. 505
10 Ibid.
11 For details, see: *Language*, Leonard Bloomfield, pp. 297-320
12 *Devabhāṣā*, literally means ‘The Language of Gods’. This term is often used as a synonym for ‘Sanskrit’. But here it is not used for the Sanskrit language but a name given to the original language which is the source of all human languages.
mentioned here refers to an age of harmony, perfection and purity. So the language of this age, Devabhāsa was "the first and the earliest vibration, pure and transparent. It was, rather, close and true transcription of the experience of the Supreme. It was the most direct sound-formation of the manifesting God-head. In its purity and flexibility, in its wealth and depth of signification and in its adaptability and application, Devabhāsa was close to Vāgdevī, the goddess of Speech. It was greatly fluid and richly subtle. It was pliable and flexible; its words were vehicles of life power, creative and correctly expressive. It carried with it the purity and warmth of the original experience; there was perfect and complete intimacy between the language and the content of the language." The Devabhāsa was 'based on the true and perfect relation of Vāk and Artha'. "Everyone of its vowels and consonants", observes Sri Aurobindo, "has a particular inalienable force which exists by the nature of things and not by development or human choice; these are the fundamental sounds which lie at the basis of the Tantric bijamantras and constitute the efficacy of the mantra itself. Every vowel and every consonant in the original language had certain primary

13 The Satyayuga mentioned here is not the golden Age of the Hindu mythology, but an age of 'Truth or true existence'. According to Sri Aurobindo "... Satyayuga is a period of the world in which a harmony, stable and sufficient, is created and man realizes for a time, under certain conditions and limitations, the perfection of his being. The harmony exists in his nature, by the force of a settled purity; but afterwards it begins to break down and man upholds it, in the Treta, by the force of will, individual and collective, it breaks down further and he attempts to uphold it in the Dwapara by intellectual regulation and common consent and rules; then in the Kali it finally collapses and is destroyed. But the Kali is not merely evil; in it the necessary conditions are progressively built up for a new Satya, another harmony, a more advanced perfection." (SABCL., p. 412)

14 Madhusudan Reddy, Vedic Epiphany, Vol. 1, p.32

15 Cf. वाग्भस्वति सम्बन्धम् ... of Kālidāsa or जीवननिर्वेक्षणं शब्दसाम्येन सम्बन्धम्: of the Mimāṁsakas.
meaning which arose out of some "essential Shakti or force, and were the basis of other derivative meanings."\(^{16}\)

This original language according to Sri Aurobindo, is the source of all human languages. Through the processes of evolution it eventually suffers 'change, detrition, collapse' and innumerable languages, dialects and vernaculars are born. There are, however, 'guardians of the sacred language' who attempt to restore it to its purity. They reconstruct it imperfectly from time to time, "preserve something of the skeleton, lose the flesh, blood, sinew, much of the force and spirit".\(^{17}\) This reconstructed language in India is called Sanskrit, a word which means 'refined, polished, correct'. Sanskrit both in its Vedic and Classical forms, is not the original language as such. But it has preserved much of the force, spirit, purity, transparency, simplicity, flexibility and directness of the original Devabhāṣā. Moreover, it has also preserved the original working system of etymons or simple root-sounds which make it a self-sufficient and independent language in the etymological sense. These root-sounds form a common element in the languages of the world which have not lost touch with the Devabhāṣā, appearing in all in slightly varying forms and carrying with them some residuum of their root-significances. One of the chief points of Sri Aurobindo's theory is that the relation between these significances, or rather 'sense-values', and the root-sounds which correspond to them is "in no way artificial."\(^{18}\) In this way the growth of different languages in different parts of the

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\(^{16}\) Sri Aurobindo, SAECI., Vol. 11, p. 449

\(^{17}\) Ibid., Vol. 10, p. 48

\(^{18}\) Ibid., Vol. 10, p. 48
world is not an arbitrary phenomenon. It is not by any chance that Greek and Latin took birth and developed in one part of the earth and Sanskrit and Tamil flourished in another. In the present days also the research works done by P.K.Kuhl\textsuperscript{19}, B.F.Lindblom\textsuperscript{20}, R.M.Allot\textsuperscript{21}, R.Brown\textsuperscript{22}, W.Kohler\textsuperscript{23}, P.Lieberman\textsuperscript{24}, and many others reveal that language cannot be in any way arbitrary.

Now since the root-sounds form the common elements in the languages of the world, it is of primary importance to recognise these root-sounds in order to establish the common origin of all languages. For this a primitive language has to be caught which has preserved much of these root-sounds of the original Devabhasa. The outwardly formed words are in no way helpful in establishing the origin of any language. "Just as from the study of the formed outward man, animal, plant, the great truths of evolution could not be discovered or, if discovered, not firmly fixed,... if the origin and unity of human speech can be found and established, if it can be shown that its development was governed by fixed laws and processes, it is only by going back to its earliest forms

\textsuperscript{21} The Physical Foundation of Language, Seaford, 1973
\textsuperscript{22} Words and Things, New York, 1958
\textsuperscript{23} Psychologic de la Forme, Paris, 1964
\textsuperscript{24} The Biology and Evolution of Language, Cambridge, 1984
that the discovery is to be made and its proofs established."\textsuperscript{25}

Sri Aurobindo maintains that it is Sanskrit language which can provide sufficient material and the right material based on which a true science of language can be founded and the origin of speech can be traced out. He says: "Law and Process must have governed the origins and developments of language. Given the necessary clue and sufficient data, they must be discoverable. It seems to me that in the Sanskrit language the clue can be found, the data lie ready for investigation."\textsuperscript{26}

Max Muller too believed that the study of Sanskrit can supply all that is necessary for the Science of Language.\textsuperscript{27} Whitney acknowledged Sanskrit as the 'most valuable means and aid' to the Comparative Philology.\textsuperscript{28} It is the study of Sanskrit or investigation of the words of Sanskrit as available today both in its Vedic and Classical forms can provide satisfactory answer to the questions related to the origin of language. Sri Aurobindo says: "Sanskrit is the key to the problem. In most other languages, we have a secondary or tertiary speech formation; we have to go beyond the actual form before us and reconstruct its parent tongue, to find again perhaps that the parent tongue has to be subjected to a similar reconstructive process. We have not sufficient materials for such a task; no instruments we possess can go deep

\textsuperscript{25} Sri Aurobindo, \textit{SABCL.}, Vol. 10, p. 563; cf. "...if we are to understand how language originates, and what distinctive novelty merges with it, we must go beyond language to trace its antecedents...", See also Erich Lenneberg, \textit{The Biological Foundations of Language}, 1967, p. 4; "Language is a complex affair. It cannot be explained in terms of its spoken and written forms alone. Its origin needs to be explained in relation to its antecedants." \textit{Ibid.}, p. 8

\textsuperscript{26} Sri Aurobindo, \textit{SABCL.}, Vol. 10, p. 47

\textsuperscript{27} \textit{Lectures on the Science of Language}, 1873, p. 45

\textsuperscript{28} \textit{Language and the Study of Language}, p. 4
enough. But, Sanskrit, by a peculiar fidelity to its origins, presents us with a true primary form of speech, in which the vocabulary indeed is late – a new structure of word flesh tissue, but the bases of the structure is primitive, and reveals the roots of its being and betrays the principles of its formation.”

II.3. Sri Aurobindo’s Methodology

Sri Aurobindo, “plunged into” the “interesting research of the origins and the laws of the development of human language” based on Sanskrit. He aimed to trace out the inner life of language, to discover its origin, to follow its successive steps of growth, and to deduce laws and processes that guided its growth and development. His acquaintance with the Tamil vocabularies also widened the scope of his research. He began the research work under the title “The Origins of Aryan Speech.” Along with Sanskrit he chose three other cognate languages — Greek, Latin and Tamil — for his research. By origin of Aryan Speech he meant the origin of human speech. In his own words, “...my subject... is the origin, growth and development of human language as it is shown to us by the embryology of the language ordinarily called Sanskrit... I base my conclusions on the evidence of the Sanskrit language helped out by those parts of Greek, Latin and Tamil tongues which are cognate to the word families of Sanskrit, and by the origins of Aryan speech I mean, properly, the origin of human speech as used and developed by those who fashioned these word-families and their stocks and offshoots.”

29 Sri Aurobindo, SABCL., Vol. 27, p. 164
30 Sri Aurobindo, SABCL., Vol. 10, p. 562
The scientific way of dealing with a subject today (not only in the field of linguistics but in all fields) has been to examine it in the most objective way, as something pure and independent, existing in and by itself. But we understand things best, and said Aristotle, if we trace them back to their origins and then follow them in their development. Sri Aurobindo too believed that the true method of science is to go back to the origins, the embryology, the elements and more obscure processes of things. Then only laws and processes which must have governed the origin and development of language can be discovered with a pure scientific approach.

In the process of discovering a true science of language Sri Aurobindo felt that what is necessarily important is "a kind of linguistic embryology." This linguistic embryology meant going back to the earliest forms of language. Hence Sri Aurobindo divided his whole research into two parts — embryonic and structural — and gave primary importance to the embryonic part. He observed that in the embryonic part it is not at all important to enquire why, for example, the Sanskrit word *vrka* means 'tearer', or *dalanam* means 'crushing'. What is important here is to note the roots of these words and enquire how *vrc* (the root of *vrka*) came to mean 'to tear', *dal* (the root of *dalanam*) came to mean 'to crush or split', "whether arbitrarily or by the operation of some

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31 see Eric Lenneberg, *Biological Foundations of Language*, p. 22
law of nature."34 In the structural type the 'modifications and additions by which those roots grow into developed words, word groups, word-families and word clans' have to be noted, and it has to be enquired "why those modifications and additions had the effect on sense and use which we find them to have exercised, why the termination ana turns dal into an adjective or a noun and what is the source and sense of the various terminations..."35

So the basic point of Sri Aurobindo's linguistic theory is "to get back always to the root as the determining unit of the language."36 As a result of this two points are gained. First, one 'gets rid of the idea of a conventional fixed connection between the sound and its sense', and second, one 'perceives that a certain object is expressed by a certain sound because for some reason it suggested a particular and striking action or characteristic which distinguished that object to the earlier human mind.'

II.4. The Growth of Language: Laws and Processes

Sri Aurobindo considers Sanskrit alphabet as a wonderful "instrument out of which the majestic and expressive harmonies of the Sanskrit language have been formed."37 Since alphabet forms the very

34 Ibid., cf. "How can sound express thought? How did roots become the signs of general ideas? How was the abstract idea of measuring expressed by mā, the idea of thinking by man? How did gam come to mean going, sthā standing, sad sitting, dā giving, mar dying, car walking, kar doing?" Max Muller, Lectures on the science of Language 1862, p. 391

35 Sri Aurobindo, SABCL., Vol. 10, pp. 566-67

36 Ibid., p. 566

37 Ibid., p. 572
base of a language it plays an important role in the enquiry of the origin and development of language. Sri Aurobindo observed that ‘the Sanskrit alphabet represents the original vocal instrument of Aryan Speech.’ The ‘regular, symmetrical and methodical character’ of the alphabet of Sanskrit is ‘evident’ and it has ‘a creation of some scientific intellect’ in it. He further clarifies that ‘Nature in a certain portion of her pure physical action has precisely this regularity, symmetry and fixity.’ In the process of formation of words the use of instruments by the earlier Aryans ‘seems to have been equally symmetrical and methodical and in close touch with the physical facts of vocal expression.’

The letters in the Sanskrit alphabet “are used as so many seed-sounds.”38 From these seed-sounds, Sri Aurobindo says, the “primitive root-sounds are formed by the simple combination of the four vowels or less frequently the modified vowels with each of the consonants....”39 Thus with ṛ (ṛ) as a base sound, the early Aryans were able to make for themselves root-sounds which they used indifferently as nouns, adjectives, verbs or adverbs to express root-ideas, – ṛ (ṛa)41,

38 Ibid.
39 Ibid., p. 573
40 The root-sound ṛ (ṛ) in its pure consonantal form has, as Sri Aurobindo suggests, ‘hard and forcible impact or action’ as its quality or original inherent sense.
41 ṛ (ṛa) is not used as a separate root in Sanskrit or it may be that Sanskrit has lost this root. It is mainly used at the end of a compound in the following senses: giving, granting, producing, as seen in words like घोट, घोटक, घोटा, घोटे etc. The Ekārthanāmamālā (1.64) of Saubhari notes the following meanings of ṛ (ṛa). अक्किलिस (without fault or disease or offence), कर्मनि (action), दान (gift/giving), न् (less), भन्न (beautiful) and शल्य (refuge).
In addition the Aryans could form if they chose the modified root-sounds \(de\) \((\text{de})\), \(dai\) \((\text{dai})\), \(do\) \((\text{do})\), \(dau\) \((\text{dau})\). The most important thing to note here, as Sri Aurobindo observes, is that these root-sounds were used by Aryans 'indifferently as nouns, adjectives, verbs or adverbs to express root-
Further 'a class of secondary root-sounds and root-words grew up from the primitive root' by adding to it 'any of the consonant sounds with its necessary or natural modifications of the already existing root-idea.' Thus on the basis of the... primitive root द (da) 'it was possible to have four guttural short secondary roots, दक् (dak), दख (dakh), दग् (dag), दघ् (dagh)', and four long, दाक् (dāk), दाख (dākh), दाग (dāg), दाघ (dāgh)...so also eight palatal, eight cerebral, with the two nasal forms दन् (dan) and दान् (dān) making ten, ten dental, ten labial liquid, six sibilant and two aspirate secondary roots. It was possible also to nasalise any of these forms, establishing for instance, दान्क् (daṅk), दानख (daṅkh), दान्ग (daṅg) दानघ् (daṅgh).

Again 'by the addition of the semi-vowels to the seed-sounds in their primitive or secondary root', or else 'by the addition of another consonant to the final of the secondary root' some illegitimate tertiary roots like द्याई (dhyai), द्यन् (dhvan), स्रु (sru), ह्रद (hlād), स्तु (stu), सच्यु (ścyu), हद् (hrad), or else वाल्ल् (vall), माज्ज् (majj), are formed. Then Sri Aurobindo

53 SABCL. Vol. 10, p. 576; cf. "...we may say that no root was ever used as a noun or as a verb. But originally roots were thus used, and in Chinese we have fortunately preserved to us a representative of that Primitive radical stage which, like the granite, underlies all other strata of human speech. The Āryān root DĀ, to give, appears in Sanskrit dānam, Greek donam, gift, as a substantive, in Sanskrit dadāmi, Greek didomi, 'I give', as a verb, but the root DĀ can never be used itself. In Chinese, on the contrary, the root TĀ as such is based in the sense of a noun, greatness; of a verb, to be great; of an adverb, greatly or much. Roots therefore are not, as is commonly maintained, merely scientific abstractions, but they were used originally as real words." Max Muller, The Science of Language. 1861, p. 364

54 Sri Aurobindo, SABCL., Vol. 10, p. 573
notes that some other illegitimate tertiary roots are also formed by the vowel and consonantal modifications. अर्च (Arc) or अर्क (ark) replacing ऋच (rc), and मर्ज (marj) replacing ऋर्ज (mrj), are some examples of vowel modification. Replacing क (k) and ग (g) for palatal च (c), छ (ch), ज (j), ज्ञ (jh) is the example of consonantal modification. “The main consonantal modifications in Sanskrit are structural and consist in the assimilation of like consonants, a hard sound becoming soft by association with a soft sound, as soft sound hard by association with a hard sound, aspirates being replaced by the corresponding unaspirated sound and modifying their companion in return...” For example लप्स्यते (lapsyate) and लब्धम (labdhum) from लभ (labh) ‘to get, gain, obtain’ substituted for लभ-स्यते (labh-syate) and लभ-तुम (labh-tum). This principle of modification or guna, notes Sri Aurobindo, “is of great importance in the study of the physical formation of the language and of its psychological development, especially as it introduces a first element of doubt and

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55 “(The vowel guna or modification works by the substitution either of the modified vowel, ए (e) for इ (i), ओ (o) for औ (u), so that we have from वि (vi) the case form वेस (vves), के (veh), from जनु (janu) the case form जनो (jano), or of the pure semi-vowel sound य (y) for इ (i), ब (b) for औ (u), र (r) for ध (r), or a little impurely य (rā), so that from वि (vi) we have the verbal form र्यंतात् (ryantah), from शु (šu), the verbal form अवश (aśvah), from व्र (ve) or व्र्ह (vṛh) the noun व्र (vraha), or else of the supported semi-vowel sound, ए (ay) for इ (i), ओ (av) for औ (u), अ (ar) for ध (r), अ (al) for ल (l), so that we have from वि the noun व्यास (vayās), from श्र (śr), the noun श्रवस (śravas), from श्र (śr) the noun सरस (saras), from क्ल (kṛ) the noun क्ल (kṛ). These forms constitute the simple gunation of the short vowel sounds ए (a), इ (i), औ (u), ध (r), ल (l); in addition we have the long modification or वर्द्धि, an extension of the principle of lengthening which gives us the long forms of the words; we have ई (ai) or आ (āy) from इ (i), ओ (au) or औ (āv) from औ (u), आ (ā) from ध (r), आ (āl) from ल (l), while ए (a) has no वर्द्धि proper but only the lengthening आ (ā). (Sri Aurobindo, SABCL., Vol. 10, p. 574)

56 Ibid., p. 575
confusion into an otherwise crystal clearness of structure and perfect mechanic regularity of formation."\textsuperscript{57} The doubt or confusion that takes place ‘is the frequent uncertainty between a regular secondary root and the irregular gunated root.’ For example अर (ar) is the regular root deriving from the primitive root अ (a), and अर (ar) deriving from the primitive root र (r) by the principle of \textit{guna} is the illegitimate or irregular root. With “these elements of variation”, Sri Aurobindo says that “we are in a position to follow the second stage in the flowering of speech from the root-state to the stage in which we pass on by a natural transition to the structural development of language.”\textsuperscript{58}

Hence, according to Sri Aurobindo, we have the seed-sounds, the alphabet, from which the primitive root-group is formed. For example from the root-sound क (क) we get the primitive-root group क (ka), का (kā), कि (ki), की (ki), कू (ku), कृ (kū), कृ (kṛ), के (ke), कै (kai), को (ko), कौ (kau). Each primitive group has its own family of secondary roots. For example, the primitive क (k) has in its family, कक (kak), कख (kakh), कग (kag), कघ (kagh), कञ (kāñ), कच (kac), कछ (kach), कज (kaj), कझ (kajh), कञ (kāñ) कट (kat), कठ (kath), कड (kad), कढ (kad), कण (kan), कप (kap), कफ (kaph), कब (kab), कभ (kabh), कम (kam), कय (kay), कर (kar), कल (kal), कव (kav), कश (kaś), कष (kaṣ), कस (kas), कह (kah), and also a certain variable number of tertiary roots such as कण (kaṇic), कं (kaṅ), कञ (kand), कल (kal), कं (kaṁs), कड़कु...
(kaṅk), क्रज् (kraj), etc. According to Sri Aurobindo eight or more families of this group would form a root-clan, and “forty of these clans would constitute the whole range of primitive language.”⁵⁹ The seed-sounds, eight vowels and their modifications four in number; five classes of consonants and the nasals; one quaternary of liquids or semi-vowels; three sibilants; one aspirate based on each of these various root-clans of the primitive Aryan Speech would have been formed. From this we come to a point that since words are not ‘artificial products’ but ‘living growths of sound’, so, the development of the human intellect would have compelled a ‘fresh growth of language and a more intricate flowering of forms’ from these root-clans. Now here is given a picture of one root-clan with the seed-sound क (k) to show how, according to Sri Aurobindo, the early Aryans would have formed root-sounds by the possible addition of vowels and consonants.

क + अ + Consonants

कक् कख् कग् कघ् कङ्
kq kqk qk qk qk
कच् कछ् कज् कझ् कञ्
kqk qkq qkq qkq qkq
कट् कठ् कड् कढ् कण्
kqk qkq kqk qkq qkq
कप् कफ् कब् कभ् कम्
kqk qkq qkq qkq qkq
कय् कर् कल् कव्
kqk qkq qkq qkq
कश् कष् कस् कह्
kqk qkq qkq qkq

All these can also have their long forms such as काक्, काख् etc.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 576
क + ह + Consonants
किक्क किख किग किघ किङ किख
किङ्ग किख किङ्ग किङ्ग किङ्ग
किङ्ग किङ्ग किङ्ग किङ्ग किङ्ग
किङ्ग किङ्ग किङ्ग किङ्ग किङ्ग
किङ्ग किङ्ग किङ्ग किङ्ग किङ्ग
किङ्ग किङ्ग किङ्ग किङ्ग किङ्ग + their long forms

क + ओ + Consonants
कुक्क कुख कुग कुघ कुङ्ग कुख
कुख कुख कुख कुख कुख
कुद कुद कुद कुद कुद
कुद कुद कुद कुद कुद
कुद कुद कुद कुद कुद
कुद कुद कुद कुद कुद
कुद कुद कुद कुद कुद + their long forms

क + ओ + Consonants
कृक्क कृख कृग कृघ कृङ्ग कृख
कृख कृख कृख कृख कृख
कृद कृद कृद कृद कृद
कृद कृद कृद कृद कृद
कृद कृद कृद कृद कृद कृद

c7
The other consonants and semivowels can have same amount of secondary roots in the above manner.

\( + \text{Semivowel primary roots (र and ल) + Consonants} \)

\( + \text{their long forms} \)

\( य \) being the modification of \( र \) it is unnatural to have forms like \( क्य \)

\( + \text{their long forms} \)
With आ it seems to be very rare

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>+ ग + Consonants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>क्रक् क्रख् क्रण् क्रघ् क्रठ्</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>क्रष् क्रछ् क्रञ् क्रइ् क्रण्</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>क्रट् क्रट् क्रइ् क्रइ् क्रण्</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>क्रत् क्रथ् क्रद् क्रण् क्रम्</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>क्रप् क्रफ् क्रब् क्रभ् क्रम्</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>क्रघ् क्रघ् क्रह् क्रम्  + their long forms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| क्रिक् क्रिख् क्रिङ् क्रिघ् क्रिठ् |
| क्रिच् क्रिछ् क्रिज् क्रिघ् क्रिज् |
| क्रिट् क्रिट् क्रिघ् क्रिघ् क्रिज् |
| क्रिट् क्रिद् क्रिद् क्रिज् क्रिन् |
| क्रिप् क्रिफ् क्रिब् क्रिभ् क्रिम् |
| क्रिप् क्रिप् क्रिब् क्रिब् क्रिम्  + their long forms |

| कुक् कुख् कुण् कुघ् कुठ्  |
| कुच् कुछ् कुज् कुझ् कुज्  |
| कुट् कुट् कुइ् कुइ् कुण्  |
| कुत् कुथ् कुद् कुध् कुन्  |
| कुप् कुफ् कुब् कुभ् कुम्  |
+ their long forms

क + छ + Consonants

क्लक् क्लख् कल् क्लप् कल्पः
क्लछ् क्लख् कल् क्लप्
क्लट् क्लट् कल्पः कल्पः
क्लत् क्लत् कल्पः कल्पः
क्लम् क्लम् कल्मः कल्मः
क्लम् क्लम् कल्मः कल्मः
क्लम् क्लम् कल्मः कल्मः
क्लम् क्लम् कल्मः कल्मः

मु + ध + Consonants

मक्क् मख् मक्कू मक्कूणः
मख् मक्कू मक्कूणः
मक्ट् मक्ट् मक्ट् मक्ट्
मक्ट् मक्ट् मक्ट् मक्ट्
मक्प् मक्प् मक्प् मक्प्
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मक्प् मक्प् मक्प् मक्प्
मक्प् मक्प् मक्प् मक्प्

2018/60
क + ल + Consonants

कलूँक कलूँख कलूँफ़ कलूँघ कलूँड़
कलूँच कलूँछ कलूँझ कलूँञ
kलूँट कलूँट कलूँड़ कलूँण
कलूँग कलूँघ कलूँड़ कलूँञ
कलूँघ कलूँघ कलूँघ कलूँञ
कलूँफ़ कलूँफ़ कलूँघ कलूँम
कलूँय कलूँय कलूँय कलूँव
कलूँश कलूँश कलूँश कलूँद + their long forms

क + च + Consonants

कवक् कवख् कवग् कवघ् कवड़
कवच् कवछ् कवज् कवझ् कवञ्
kवट कवट कवट कवण्
कवत् कवघ् कवट् कवघ् कवन्
कवप् कवफ् कवब् कवभ् कवम्
kवय् कवय् कवल् कवव्
कवश् कवश् कवस् कवह् + their long forms
Each of these words, says Sri Aurobindo, "would in the primitive nature of language, like each man in the primitive constitution of human society, fulfill at once several functions, noun, verb, adjective and adverbs at once."

According to Sri Aurobindo as the Aryans could form the root-words by adding consonant sounds to the primitive root-sounds, so by the aid of the same device they could have proceeded in making appendage sounds and structural sounds "by adding to the developed root-word any of the same consonant sounds, pure or conjunct with others, with an enclitic sound either as the connective support or a formatory support or both, or else by adding the enclitic sound alone as a substantial appendage." Thus, having the root वद (vad) meaning to speak they could form from it at their will by the addition of the consonant त (t), वदत (vadat), वदित (vadit), वदुत (vadut), वदृत (vadrt), or वदत
The same principle was also employed in the variations of the verbs and in the formations of the cases. This is the first step showing 'the way in which the instrument of the vocal sound has been determined and used by the agent.' The next step is to examine 'the relation of the particular ideas to be expressed to the particular sound or sounds which express it.' 'There must be these two elements, the structure of the language, its roots, formations and the growth, and the psychology of the use of the structure.'

Ibid., pp. 577-578; The actual use of all these possibilities in the case of a single word is not found and one would not expect to find them. The richness of forms is much greater in earlier Aryan speech than in later literature. The reason behind this may be, as Sri Aurobindo notes, that "with the growth of intellectual richness and precision there would be a corresponding growth in the mental will-action and the supersession of the mechanical mind processes by more clearly and consciously selective mind processes," (SABCL., Vol. 10, p. 578). Cf. "The number of these phonetic types must have been almost infinite in the beginning and it was only through the same process of natural elimination...that clusters of roots, more or less synonymous, were gradually reduced to one definite type," (Max Muller, The Science of Language, 1862, p. 393). A through investigation of the words in the Vedic and later Sanskrit shows that 'a wide and free natural labour of formation' is always followed by 'a narrowing process of rejection and selection'. "But always the same original principle either simply or complexly applied, with modification or without modification of the root vowels and consonants, is and remains the whole basis and means of noun-structure," (Sri Aurobindo, SABCL., Vol. 10, p. 576).
Once the above step is covered then one must 'find an equal regularity, an equal reign of fixed process on the psychological side, in the determining of the relation of particular sense to particular sound.' Without this the first step is incomplete. Sri Aurobindo observes that it is not any "arbitrary or intellectual choice but a natural selection that has determined the growth and arrangement of the sounds." As an example he explains that first the seed-sound व (v) must have something inherent in it which connected it with the actual senses borne by the primitive roots व (va), वा (vā),

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63 Ibid., P. 580; "...substantially the whole of the language with all its forms and inflexions is the inevitable result of the use by Nature in man of one single rich device, one single fixed principle of sound formation employed with surprisingly few variations, with an astonishingly fixed, imperative and most tyrannous regularity but also a free and even superfluous original abundance in the formation. The inflexional character of Aryan speech is itself no accident but the inevitable result, almost physically inevitable, of the first seed selection of sound-process, that original apparently trifling selection of the law of the individual being which is at the basis of all Nature's infinitely varied regularities. Fidelity to the principle already selected being once observed the rest results from the vary nature and necessities of the sound-instrument that is employed. Therefore, in the outward form of language, we see the operation of a regular natural law proceeding almost precisely as Nature proceeds in the physical world to form a vegetable or an animal genus and its species." (Ibid., pp. 579-80)

64 व (v) in its pure consonantal form according to Sri Aurobindo has 'manifestation', 'existence' as its essential sense.

65 व (va) in Sanskrit means 'strong', 'powerful' (see A Practical Sanskrit English Dictionary, V.S.Apte, p. 823).

66 In Sanskrit वा (Vā) as root means 'to blow, go, move, strike, dry' etc. It is also used as an indeclinable and has the following senses 'or', 'and', 'as well as', 'also', 'like', 'as', 'indeed', 'truly', 'only', (see V.S. Apte, p. 839)
Secondly, the variations in sense between these roots must have taken place because of the inherent tendency of significance in the variable or vowel element within them. "Thirdly, the secondary roots depending in \( \text{fa} \), \( \text{va} \), \( \text{vak} \), \( \text{van} \), \( \text{vam} \), \( \text{val} \), \( \text{vap} \), \( \text{vah} \), \( \text{vaa} \), \( \text{vas} \), etc. must have a common element in their significances and, so far as they varied originally, must have varied as a result of the element of difference, the consonantal termination \( \text{c} \), \( \text{j} \), \( \text{w} \), \( \text{p} \), \( \text{h} \), \( \text{s} \), \( \text{s} \), respectively. Finally in the structural state of language, although as a result of the growing power of conscious selection other determining factors may have entered into the selection of particular significances for the particular words, yet the original factor cannot have been entirely inoperative and such forms as \( \text{vadana} \), \( \text{vadatra} \), \( \text{vada} \), etc. must have been governed in the development of their

67 The primary \( \text{fa} \) means 'to appear, burst out, be divulged, to split open, separate'; and transitively, 'to see, know, discriminate, separate, divulge, repose,' etc. These meanings can be traced through a host of derivatives in Sanskrit, Latin and Tamil. Sanskrit has the root \( \text{fa} \) 'to know'; \( \text{vii} \) 'to separate, discriminate'. Latin \( \text{vile} \) means common, cheap; \( \text{villa} \) means open place, country place, country seat; \( \text{vendo} \) means I sell; \( \text{venalis} \) means to be sold; but especially \( \text{video} \) means I see. Tamil \( \text{vii} \) means to give light, shine; \( \text{vii} \) means eye. (see Sri Aurobindo Archives and Research, April 1978, p. 56; December 1978, pp. 151-52). There is no root as \( \text{fa} \) in Sanskrit but when used with a \( \text{visarga} \) it means 'a bird, a horse, a rein'; (see V.S. Apte, p. 847)

68 \( \text{vii} \) as a root exists and means 'to go, move, approach, bring,' etc. (see Apte, p. 881

69 \( \text{vu} \) and \( \text{vii} \) are altogether lost in Sanskrit.

70 \( \text{vii} \) exists in its verbal forms and means 'to choose, select as a boon, cover, keep away', etc. (see Apte, p. 883)

71 \( \text{vii} \) is similar with \( \text{vii} \) and is confined only to the meaning 'to choose, select'.

55
sense dominantly by their substantial and common sound-element, to a certain extent by their variable and subordinate element."72

Sri Aurobindo, further observes that the "first instrument in such a growth, the first in urgency, importance and time, would be the impulse towards distinguishing more formally between the action, the agent and the object, therefore of establishing some sort of formal distinction, however vague at first, between the noun-idea and the verb-idea. The second impulse, possibly simultaneous, would be towards distinguishing structurally, ...between the various lines and shades of action, of establishing in modern language, tense forms, voices, moods. The third impulse would be towards the formal distinction of various attributes, such as number and gender, and various relations of the subject and object themselves to the action, of establishing case forms and forms of singularity, duality, plurality."73

These are the lines upon which Sri Aurobindo has conducted his enquiry. But the full proof of the results depends upon 'a larger labour of minute classification both of root-families and word-families in all the greater Aryan tongues'. Some of the works done by Sri Aurobindo show that he did attempt a minute classification of the above kind.74 But all his works in this field are left incomplete. Yet what he has presented

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72 Sri Aurobindo, SABCL., Vol. 10, p. 580-81
73 Ibid., pp. 76-77
through these works “will”, in his own words, “be judged sufficient for a secure foundation. If it does no more, it may possibly lead to a deeper and freer approach to the problem of the origin of speech, which once undertaken in the right spirit and with an eye for the more subtle clues, cannot fail to lead to a discovery of the first importance to human thought and knowledge.”

75 Sri Aurobindo, SABCL., Vol. 27, p. 166