CHAPTER VI

IMPLICATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION

6.1 Introduction.

The Bharati script will have tremendous impact in many different areas when accepted by the people, approved by the Government and propagated through the primary educational institutions across the vast tribal lands of our country. By eliminating four way distinction of speech sounds and limiting coding to two way contrasts, we have brought down writing within the reach of the common man. By basing the gradations and contrasts of speech sounds on theoretical principles, we have made the system acceptable also to the intellectuals.

Following a new methodology to make the script totally in tune with the writing technology and mass application, in contravention of some of the earlier directions and principles of following only the considerations of linguistic fitness and socio-cultural acceptance, we have arrived at a wholesome theory of writing as a scientific coding process. The constructive applicational prospect is an encouraging pointer to a possible change in the field of writing in India.
The main planks of this new approach are theoretical principles, linguistic integrity and technical independence from the limitations of the script systems. In India, adaptation of Bharati script for major languages will enhance the flow of thought and information between language communities and linguistic states. Communication will slowly become freer, not being filtered through the respective scripts.

Writing in India has so far been in the direction of developing a written language that is fossilized, pickled and imprisoned by tradition. By taking this step we will be freeing it from all the forces that strangulate a unified growth of languages and make written language a dynamic force fitted up to the hilt with the potential to meet the needs of modern day. We will examine in some detail the advantages of Bharati in different possible areas of application.

6.2 A Technical Evaluation

A comprehensive assessment of the technical advantage will be of primary importance when the challenges of universal literacy, mass production of written materials and advantageous usage of what has been printed, face us. The quality of scripts, has in many ways restricted spontaneous growth and development of printing trade in India. Bengali needs three tier type faces, the
code of signs totaling 510, though there are just 12 vowels and 39 consonants (Sen and Dutta, 1985:91). Malayalam had 660 characters (now reduced to 120), and Tamil needs 106 letters though there are only 30 phonemes. Kannada needs 222 script matrices with only 52 distinct signs (Ramachandraiah, 1985:82). Even after the introduction of computerised photo-type-setting and web-offset, the overall achievement regarding Indian languages from a typographical standpoint is not very impressive. In the developed countries such crippling defects in the technology of printing are not felt. The advantages of the Roman script are

1) Less number of characters.

2) Absence of diacritics.

3) Separate representation of vowels and consonants.

4) Letter shapes roughly of same size.

All these advantages are incorporated in Bharati along with the representational potential of Nagari. By fixing the total number characters at laterally representable 36 forms there is possibility of enhancing printing efficiency.

Bharati also has the potential of ushering in an era of new typography in Indian language typewriters and
computers. Having a uniform code will allow the development of a single keyboard usable all over India. This has great advantages in learning the manipulation and actual use of typewriters. All research can go into the making of a standard Indian language keyboard and an IL (Indian language) keyboard learning strategy can be effectively evolved, which need not entail extra burden to remember unusual forms and their combinations. What is learnt in school about script can be carried on to the keyboard. Also in terms of the technical procedure and manpower involved also there will be distinct advantages. Much manpower and precious time need not be wasted in arriving at one symbol. The typewriting machines can move smoothly onwards as all superscripts, subscripts and off-beat combinations are ruled out. Typing Indian languages will soon become as enjoyable an experience as typing the English language.

One computer hardware can be used for all Indian languages without keyboard overlay or other techniques. Shift from one language to another will become a simple procedure and computer scientists, instead of wasting their knowhow in the problems of transliteration and generating a host of symbols can direct their attention to the problems of machine translation, processing speech to writing and other uses that computers can be put into. A whole new culture of thinking and application will develop in Indian
language computers. This will make typewriters, computers and printing technology cost-effective Indian language-education tools.

6.3 Primary Education in Mother Tongue

Within two decades of the advent of vernacular elementary education for the masses, planned, propelled and spread by the missionaries and approved and enhanced by the then British Government, the policy drastically changed laying stress on higher education in English for a select few. The rationale behind this was the downward percolation theory, though there were other practical reasons. It was a foreign ruling power and the moral responsibility of the government could not be forced into their higher echelons. Those who were against the policy were highly limited by the available technology, finance and manpower to implement their vision effectively. We have hitherto continued with the same policy, resulting in the accumulation of the highest number of illiterates of the world in our country.

Elementary education in mother-tongue is the most effective, greatest and noblest tool in the hands of a government to shape the society in the most constructive way. Moreover, with an additional tool of a simple dynamic common script, at the very basic level, a certain amount of unity can be achieved. The major regional languages have already gone well beyond the scope of exerting any such
influence now. But the tribal community are the toddlers of civilisation, learning the modern ways of thinking. Their language is still in the making, fresh without the influences of written tradition, a maiden soil for constructive thinking to grow.

This is the place where any welfare government can think of making an effective influence. These are the languages where a new way of writing can be introduced. These are the cherished beds where fresh new plants can grow.

Introducing primary education in mother tongue for these people has so far proved to be a stupendous task. The reasons are not far to seek. The linguistic thinking all these years had been integrating the writing system to be developed with the one for the nearest major language. Thus a compromise had to be struck between the linguistic and socio-cultural demands. Now the times have changed. Modern technology has well exposed the insufficiencies of writing traditions. The cultural roots have shown weak spots of breaking points that we can no more cling on to. Our thinking has to change. The modern technological demands have to be the focal points while making decisions so that our goals of education and eradication of illiteracy can be effectively achieved.
For primary education to be a success, the input of the teachers and parents are of vital importance, as the child at so young an age gets slowly transferred from the world of the parents to the world outside. If the transition has to be smooth it should be built on a strong base - the mother tongue base already developed over the few years in the life of the child. Communication totally breaks down and the human computer system goes haywire when all of a sudden new words i.e. a totally new linguistic system is introduced, and without giving a moment for the child to assimilate the new spoken language, its written form is also taught. The baffled child and the baffled parent have no other option but to be hurled into the mire of school drop-outs and illiterate millions. Thus the non-literate groups are doubly handicapped in achieving literacy. The pyramidal growth that can be seen in the individuals and consequently in the community as a whole is not seen in them.

- apex of high intellectual activity
- broad mother-tongue base of the individual
- apex of a developed society
- education for all in the community
The power of education and its role in society should never be restrained by extraneous constraints such as resources, finance, size of the problem or the means to fulfill these. Viable methods have to be formulated. The problem is immense in India especially for the tribal societies. Various efforts do not give the expected dividends due to plurality of languages and dialects coming from totally different linguistic backgrounds, the number of isolated languages running into several hundreds and the number of people speaking these languages limited to just around sixty million. But these sixty millions are part of Bharat, forming a section of its cultural heritage, having every right to use their own language and tradition for the betterment of their societies. Such a huge task can be tackled only if we have a scientific common coding system. Bharati will provide the means being a derivative from and a fusion of our various cultural achievements sublimated by the modern needs of the society. The maze of tangled unrealistic alternatives should give way to realistic practical thinking to bring in a new era of possibilities.

Our coding symbols as arranged in the classificatory chart present the following picture.
Table 17. Bharati Script in the classification chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Group I</th>
<th>Group II</th>
<th>Group III</th>
<th>Group IV</th>
<th>Group V</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VOWELS</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEDIALS</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLOSE SOUNDS</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Kurux phonology fits into this with a few superfluous symbols. They are ʔ, ɭ and ɭvements.

ʔ - for loan words from Aryan languages

ɭ - for loan words from Dravidian languages

ɭvements - for loan words from English and other languages.

The sound 'Z' which seems to have been left out can be included in the phonetic field of [ ʔ ] and not with [ ɭ ] as is done often. The same chart can take in other non literary languages also.

We will now examine the phonology of a few contiguous languages of Kurux.
1. **Mundari.**

Table 18. Bharati and Mundari

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<th>II</th>
<th>III</th>
<th>IV</th>
<th>V</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vowels</strong></td>
<td>ə</td>
<td>ə</td>
<td>ə</td>
<td>ə</td>
<td>ə</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Medials</strong></td>
<td>ə</td>
<td>ə</td>
<td>ə</td>
<td>ə</td>
<td>ə</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>** Stops**</td>
<td>ə</td>
<td>ə</td>
<td>ə</td>
<td>ə</td>
<td>ə</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(deduced from Sinha BBTWRI 1965: 168, 169)

○ - gaps

258
The phonology completely fits into this chart and the superfluous symbols (ṣ, ṭ, ṭha, ṭa, ṭi) can take in loan items.

2. Santhali

The Santhali phonology resembles Hindi phonology as far as the vowel system is concerned. It shows a variety of variations and gradations. The short vowels are ā, a, i, u, e, o, ṭa, and all these present two degrees of length and nasal contrasts (Prasad, 1961: 296).

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Short</td>
<td>vowels</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length</td>
<td>contrasts</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasal</td>
<td>contrast</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total number of vowels will be 7 x 3 x 2 = 42

All types of vowel combinations come as diphthongs. This is the major linguistic reason for preference of the Roman script to that of the Nagari for Santhali language as alphabets can be easily used to denote any diphthong.

Such an unwieldy vowel system reflects all the phonetic possibilities and needs much planning at the level of phonology and orthography. The short vowels can be rewritten as:

a  i  u  e  o

thus bringing in /a/ and /ɔ/ as members of one phonemic set. In the same way /ɔ/ can be made a member of /o:/ phonemic set. The same is true in Hindi graphological pattern. The /e/ /e:/ and /o/ /o:/ contrasts are not found in Hindi. But the graphic structure shows a single feature contrast as ए ऐ or ो ओ and उ ऊ, or ु उ. At the phonetic level the contrasts are either /e/ /ɛ/ and /o/ /ɔ/ or /e/ /ai/ and /o/ /au/. Thus for Santhali also we can plan the phonology as two way contrast, bringing represented possibilities to 5 and the contrast to a minimum two way contrast of length. This will go a long way in teaching written language to illiterate people.

The close consonants show regular variation. We have voiceless/voiced contrasts at all five positions of the close sounds. All the five nasal close sounds have phonemic value. So a perfect fit can be obtained between Bharati script and Santhali phonology in this area.

When we consider the medial sounds, we find that Santhali has /ʃ/ /ʃ/ contrast in the first group, /s/ in the second, /r/ /r/ contrast in the third and /l/ in the fourth. The [ʃ] grapheme can represent the glottal sound as it belongs to the same group. Thus /x/ of Kurux and /ʔ/ of Santhali can be considered to be members of the same phoneme set. Or /ʔ/ can be totally left out as its function is mainly to negotiate contiguous vowels. Such a phenomenon is found in many languages and is not given
representation in the orthography. The extra symbols \( \mathfrak{a}, \mathfrak{or}, \mathfrak{d} \) and \( \mathfrak{y} \) can be used for loan categories.

3. **Ho**

The next major tribal language in Bihar is Ho. The vowel system is

\[ \text{a i u e o} \]

\( /a/ \) and \( /\mathfrak{a}/ \) should be considered as members of the first short vowel phoneme \( \{ \mathfrak{I} \} \). Ho exhibits length contrast and nasalisation is a variant phonetic realisation. Hence Bharati can be used with facility for Ho without any difficulty.

Phonemic variations at five positions with voicing contrasts are found for close sounds. Nasal close sounds are realised in three positions. At the medial position we find /h/ \( /\mathfrak{h}/ \) contrast in the first group, /s/ in the second, /\( \mathfrak{r} \)/ \( /\mathfrak{r}/ \) contrast in the third and /l/ in the fourth. The extra graphemes will accommodate loan words. Diphthongs are realised with all possible combinations. So alphabetic Bharati will perfectly suit the language.

4. **Chodri**

Now we can consider some other non-literate languages spoken in other parts of the country. Chodri is a language of Bhil group belonging to Indo-Aryan family. It
is spoken in Surat district of South Gujarat. The phonological pattern is given by Thomas and Thomas (1985:3). The vowel system is:

\[
\begin{array}{cccccc}
\text{a} & \text{i} & \text{u} & \text{e} & \text{o} & \text{ə} \\
\end{array}
\]

/a/ and /ə/ can be represented with grapheme [l].

The close consonants have voiceless/voiced contrast at all five positions. Nasals are found in 4 positions, leaving out the one in the first group. Apart from these, aspiration contrasts are realised at all five positions for voiceless close sounds. We have decided not to represent aspiration. Hence at this level Chodri phonology will fit in within Bharati representation.

In medial position we find

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
\text{ʋ} & \text{g} & \text{z} & \text{d} \\
\end{array}
\]

There are no superfluous sounds and the few superfluous graphemes can either be omitted or used for loan words.

5. **Kodagu**

Kodagu is a Dravidian language spoken in the Coorg district of Karnataka. Its vowel system deviates from the normal system of other Dravidian languages in that along with the five vowels it has two additional vowel qualities,
ë and í. These vowels seem to be 'aberrant vowels' (Balakrishnan, 1976 : XXXVII). When we are speaking of a scientific approach to writing and a coding system that will lead to the formation of a pan Indian phonology, these 'aberrant' phonetic realisations should not be given representation in phonology via orthography. Hence we will treat /ë/ as part of the phonetic set of /e/ and /í/ as a member of the set /i/. This will help in deducing which symbol to use and when, and plan the future development of the language along a channelised path. The consonant system does not present any incongruence with Bharati.

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<th>I</th>
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<th>III</th>
<th>IV</th>
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The medial sounds in the second group present a three way contrast which we endeavour to eliminate. This contrast is seen mainly in words of Sanskrit origin such as /viṣeṣa/ /śuddhi/ /veśa/ etc. Even in Hindi the contrast is retained only in the orthographic convention and obliterated in phonetic realisation. Hence it is not a big problem to reduce the three way contrast into a simple, feasible two
way contrast. There are only two superfluous symbols \( \varsigma \) and \( \psi \) and these as usual can be used for loans.

What is the advantage of having a uniform code in enhancing primary education and eradicating illiteracy?

The greatest apparent advantage is in the printing of text books in these non-literary languages. The planners need not make unusual, out of the ordinary, unviable and variant demands on printing institutions. The other advantages are indirect and latent. It is practically difficult to get such large number of teachers to teach non-literary languages. Now this script can be learnt in a matter of few days by any teacher and used in schools. Moreover, as we use the same coding system, checking can be done among teachers from different, but contiguous language groups. The children who are just learning to utter various phonetic possibilities will not be baffled by unwanted minute differentiations of speech sounds.

Gandhiji's educational policies stemmed directly from his knowledge of the national situation and the needs, particularly of the vast, inarticulate rural population of India. He realised well that education was cut off from the concrete realities of ordinary life in India. He pleaded for a common script to be used in India.

The policy of our country is that each one should have the right to have elementary education in his mother-
tongue. But in practice it has been applied only to the major languages. How to solve the innumerable intricacies involved in making education realistic to these people? Steps, such as 'each one teach one' can never be practical in solving the problem of the people and history has shown that the downward percolation theory is a colossal failure. If we aim at practical goals, it should start as a fresh new spring from the ground. Our thinking that education in major languages will bring these people to the mainstream of national activity, has to give way to a new thinking that only living little streams make up a healthy mainstream. Instead of trying to make them distributaries, we have to accept them as tributaries contributing to the totality of India. The only answer to make possible the flow of fresh streams is to bring in education in their mother tongue. At this point in history, the practical solution is nothing but a common script, simple, devoid of all intriguing diacritics, and alphabetic thus making typing, printing and even reading and writing easier. Thus we will first make our project technically viable and psychologically acceptable.

Otherwise there is little hope of achieving the target of universal elementary education by 1995, the key plank of the New Education Policy and total eradication of illiteracy by A.D.2000, the major thrust of the International Year of Literacy.
We will have to face a practical problem of finding teachers to teach the children in the new script. A comprehensive training in the script can be given in a matter of ten days. Moreover, it is not that we need only trained and approved teachers. Many young men from the tribal communities are coming up who have great concern for their people. They are educated, but unemployed. A handful of dedicated young people with enthusiasm and commitment may be harnessed to spread education in a village to their own people. At the earliest stage of education, it is always advantageous to have teachers sharing the mother tongue with the 4, 5, or 6 year olds. So these young men and women should not be expected to go through the formalities of getting government approval, but appointed by the local leaders of the community. What the government can do is to find ways and means of giving them basic training for a few days in their own areas, extend official approval and encourage them by sanctioning grants.

Evidence abounds that in early nineteenth century, in Chotanagpur area, Governor Generals, Governors, Commissioners and Directors of Boards visited the upcoming primary schools and sanctioned generous grants for their development. The leaders of the community, the society at large, the state government and the Central government should concentrate on these primary schools, for this is where we put the oil for the engine of growth and
development. The ills of the society have to be treated from the very roots instead of taking efforts to alleviate the results of such neglect. The facilitious way of introducing mother tongue education in Bharati will provide the necessary infrastructure for education to be stepped up to higher levels. When the children reach 6th standard or even third, a second language of their choice can be introduced.

When the government initiates introduction of primary level books in one Bharati script for many different languages, other agencies can extend a helping hand so that adult literacy will be achieved simultaneously. The Indian Press which has a considerable coverage in spite of illiteracy and lack of basic education, can launch an all out effort in bringing out standard newspapers in tribal languages. The fact that one code can be used for all languages can make it cost effective. When vernacular elementary education was first introduced in the Bengal province, the planners, the Serampore trio simultaneously started a Bengali newspaper 'Samachar Darpan' which reached a circulation of several thousands in a decade. History has shown us the way. These non-literary people thirst for modern education, but know not how to get it. Once basic education is provided in mother tongue and newspaper coverage promoted, it will automatically propagate adult literacy. Present adult literacy programmes do not yield the desired results due to lack of education in mother-
tongue and lack of adequate material. The newspapers that have already established their mark over Indian intelligentsia will be the most effective means to spread functional literacy among the non-literate people.

Industry can help in its own way by producing typewriters and print faces with just 36 letters with the international form of numbers and punctuation marks. The keyboard pattern should be based on proper research taking into consideration the approximate frequency counts and the flexibility of fingers. If these are also given to the people with a subsidy, it will go a long way in making their languages functional in the modern world.

The state government can extend loans to the unemployed tribal youths to establish printing presses in tribal areas near the schools so that any creative output of the community can find its way into print and get propagated. This is what is being done in Tamilnadu and it has fostered the growth of the language. When education has become meaningful to the society, its literary output will increase. No coercion will then be needed to force the community to accept education. The schools, though they may be tattered huts, will become citadels of knowledge where the children throng to participate. Education will be a thing of joy and a domain unfolding at every stage wonder and novelty. Once the children have learnt the trade of writing, they will easily learn to write other languages.
Once swimming is mastered in a pool, it needs just a little more effort to swim in the river or the sea! Once the tribal children learn their own tradition and customs through songs and stories coming in print in the text books, they will no more look down upon their own culture, but rather cherish it as the most valuable gift of their forefathers. The present educational system actually alienates them from their own values and with education they join the privileged section leaving others to fend for themselves. This will no more be the case when constructive education is provided at their doorsteps.

6.4 Effects on Language Convergence

The problem of script had been very real and enormous indeed for the non literary languages of India. Most of the non-literate groups that find it difficult to integrate with the major language groups are tribal. The tribal concentration, or the tribal belt lies across India, from east to west extending from the Northwestern states of Jammu Kashmir, Haryana and Rajasthan to the Northeastern states of Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura. This area also covers the major part of the Hindi belt, actually the domain of dominant Indo Aryan languages using a variant of the Nagari script for writing. As such, most of our non-literary languages are directly or indirectly forced to use the Nagari script, and the Nagari
in turn, by virtue of being the constitutionally approved National script, tries to accommodate all different sounds, deviant from its own system and day by day becomes more complicated and tough. The intellectuals who introduce such changes are totally unaware of the problem it poses for the common user. But time and again voices are raised from different quarters against this trend. Vembuswami writes "The language muddle and its consequences will prove disastrous if pro-Hindi extremists do not shed their obduracy to impose their language with the tough Devanagari script on a national medium" (The Hindu, Sept 7, 1989). He suggests "The most practical thing to do to meet the altered conditions is to have English and Hindi as the twin link languages of the country subject to the condition that the Devanagari script is replaced by the Roman script to make it easy for all the linguistic regions". Thota concurs with him saying "it was in the thirties that Subhas Chandra Bose ardently promoted the idea of the Roman script for Hindustani language and all other Indian languages so that modern Indian civilization could evolve smoothly for a better interaction of the masses with the outside world.(The Hindu, Sept 25, 1989) This is the point where exactly Bharati comes in. Being very simple and at the same time scientific and based on known Nagari graphics it will appeal to the non-literate groups. It will be easy to master and easy to put into writing any language of India. If we use this for education in mother tongue for the non-literate
groups, apart from making it simple for them to use, it will bring in language convergence in these areas to an unprecedented extent. Even in the days of writing with stylus on palm leaves, there was language convergence between Sanskrit and Tamil. Malayalam is a living testimony to this. Now, with our printing establishments this process will be quickened beyond measure, surpassing all our theoretical expectations. It will allow the working of Tribal language conferences, far greater in dimension than the literary conferences of India two millenia ago. Language scientists and literary artists will be able to generate a living force in the cauldron of real life situations. These non-literate people are the people India needs now. These are the people who can fill the gap and build up relations between languages, destroying the barriers and breaking the walls. We need to launch such a venture on a war footing to reverse the process of the 'Tower of Babel' spreading so fast in India. Such an effort, set in motion by Bharati, while stalling the seething language problem, language chauvinism and language purism, will automatically generate a language which is naturally common to the people of India. With Bharati as a tool to bring in such convergence and emergence of a new language formula, the negotiations between languages will no more be arbitrary, but clear and definite with a forward looking evolution of languages along routes that lead to the same destination, ushering in a new era of thinking on the
language issue. Now there is a colossal loss of the contributions of the already existing linguistic resources to the totality of Indian linguistic situation mainly due to the different scripts in use. The unused language resources have to be tapped and used to the advantage of the country as a whole, so that the language controversy never again regains its pernicious hold over the Indian society. We should also try to undo the present language ethics of our country - that of evoking a virgin figure of language and demanding purity of language entity. The new concept of 'usefulness' as the prime factor in language development should be created. Then the natural engineering talents of the people would weld and integrate languages, making bridges wherever needed and docking linguistic items wherever possible.

The present trend in India whenever words are needed to translate official or scientific documents, is to coin new words in each language. As the mechanism of speech is universal, the mechanisms that go into the acceptance of any vocabulary item is also universal. Word coinages cannot be attempted in an off hand manner. Words coined, sometime, somewhere in history have to pass through several testing channels and if needed they are modified by the users according to the criteria of facility, economy and euphony, i.e. least manipulation of the articulatory mechanism and only then do they receive popular acceptance and currency.
Only such items become part of a language. Thus, languages grow fast not through indiscriminate coinages but through free borrowing of words already accepted and approved in a speech community and are thus liable to be accepted in other communities too. New coinages in Indian languages for official purposes, independent of each other and without such considerations, are totally rejected by the public and our languages do not become fit for usage on official levels. Language purists, translators and legislators coin words that boggle the mind. Language protagonists become self appointed language censors. They pick out this or that word, name it as a borrowed item and discard it as foreign, advocating purity of language and not realizing that the growth of a language is a historical phenomenon spanning over centuries or millennia.

Understanding this phenomenon of language development is the need of the hour. Gone should be the days when lexicographers and others felt proud to say:

"In spite of great attention paid to this particular point, a small percentage of Hindi loan words, or slightly altered forms of Hindi words have crept in, which should have gained no admittance as being paralleled by synonyms of genuine Oraon stock. Such intruders ............" (Grignard, 1924: ii)."
"I have some misgivings about a few Kera words and expressions which are too Hindiized to appear genuine. They no doubt reflect the language as it is spoken now at least in urban centres or by educated people". (Ponette, 1975)

"Hindi faces a threat not only from English, but from other foreign languages as well". (Godse, 1989)

Such views can only spell doom to a language by arresting its free growth towards greater resourcefulness, beauty in form and expression, and strength in communication. A language that stops assimilating words thrown up by the process of social evolution cannot survive for long, especially now when greater communication has to be established between peoples of the world. In this way the language chauvinists are only an ill-advised lot.

The semantic domain of any language should be ever expanding as Ayto says in 'The Longman Register of New Words' that 'he has gathered together 1200 new pieces in the never finished jigsaw of the English language.'

Tribal language groups of India can prove to be the pioneers of such a changed outlook. Many tribal languages do not even have words for 'reading' and 'writing', and as such have to borrow heavily from other
sources. To co-ordinate this process, Tribal Languages Planning and Development centres should be established. They should make an all out effort to turn the social problem into an opportunity for productive innovation and meaningful convergence. These centres then should be helped to function in a co-ordinated manner so that the tribal languages per se will borrow same linguistic items from different sources. Thus, the newly developed side of the languages will show great similarities. This will enhance communication among themselves and communication with other major language groups.

Creativity can take different forms. The tribal languages have remained non-literary so long that there is no well defined written grammatical tradition except for the words of this century. Most of the grammatical terms are being borrowed or coined. For example, Kurux has derived a word from /piṅjnā/ (to impose a name) to denote a noun -/pinjaka/. This is to some extent in consonance with the Hindi term /sangya/ for noun. But the Hindi term, though it seems to be short and facilitating free usage does not easily establish in the mind of the child or any learner, the relationship between the concept the word stands for, and the word itself. This is because the word is derived from Sanskrit and is not in common usage. Sanskrit is a language which has already passed away though it has left its
footprints on the sands of Indian languages. Trying to revive unused words will be like asking a dead cat to bounce. This outlook of the specialists makes grammar all the more difficult. So for tribal languages it will be advantageous to use simple words. Thus /ṇamē/ [४] can be used to denote a noun. The phonetic content already forms part of the common core vocabulary of India and the same word will be accepted by all the tribal languages.

In the same way the word /kriya/ is beyond comprehension and the word used in Kurux is /arjānā/ meaning 'to earn'. Instead we can pick from a pan Indian term /kām/. /Kmnā/ in Kurux means 'to make', 'to create'. This word is closer to the meaning and has already gained currency. Hence a word such as /kāmnā/ or /kāmē/ can be derived and used for verb for all non-literary languages. Such steps will pave a realistic path towards a meaningful fulfilment of the needs of the people.

Language convergence has also the potential to correct the flaws in the language systems. The Tamil script system, though the simplest in India, is dubbed unphonetic because it does not accommodate the second generation marker contrast for consonants, i.e. voicing. This also does not allow the language to borrow freely from other languages. Using Bharati will rectify such shortcomings in the language.
Some of the decisions we have made in simplifying Nagari will also directly help in language convergence. For example we can consider our decision of not giving independent representation to vowel nasalisation and consonant aspiration. We can examine a concrete example from Kurux. /pāk/ means 'to purify', /phāk/ means 'a crack' or 'a crevice'. As per our decision, we will have to write both these words in the same way in Bharati. Thus it will be [Ψνφ]. These two words that were phonetically differentiated are graphologically represented in the same way which means that it will throw into the language some sets of homophones. What will be the effect of such a realization on the totality of Kurux language system? May be, if the native speakers can easily identify the meaning in the context of its realization, they will keep it as homophones. Otherwise the overall tendency working in all languages will take over and put in disuse one of these words. The void that will be formed will in advance be filled with a borrowed word from any of the contiguous languages - Santhali, Mundari, Ho or Hindi. So this decision will greatly quicken language convergence in a very realistic way.

We need a new language culture and a new outlook to develop a standard language which will be "stabilized by appropriate codification" and at the same time "flexible enough to allow for modification". (Garvin, 1973 : 27) We
may also anticipate 'intellectualisation' i.e. a tendency towards increasingly more definite and accurate expression, increased terminological precision and development of new terms and word formation techniques. (ibid) People's imagination on ideal expression will allow the intellectual, economic, communicative and sharing sides of human nature to develop the vocabulary of every language. This is what will be the real human resource development.

There is yet another process initiated by Bharati that will expedite language convergence. What we have seen is a process that may go on within a language. But we can also envisage interlanguage convergence in a future time when major Indian languages start using the script. We will elucidate this process by taking an example.

Indian languages abound in shared lexical items that might have come from the common sources of Sanskrit, Persian, English etc. We will take the word 'Vachan' meaning 'utterance' or 'speech'. The word is written variously in different Indian languages and written in a strikingly similar manner in Bharati.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present Script</th>
<th>Gujrati</th>
<th>Hindi</th>
<th>Tamil</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bharati</td>
<td>ओ</td>
<td>ओ</td>
<td>ஓாலி</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

278
Using the common script, Bharati will bring out the commonness in Indian languages and crystallize a standard form. After use in a space of time the linguistic items will form part of the vocabulary of a new Indian language which may be evolved - Indiani or Bharati. We will proceed a little further on the same line. This word 'vachan' has undergone some changes in languages in its derivative form. For example the word 'bachna' means 'reading aloud' in Hindi. In Tamil the word is 'vachi' [வச்சி]. Most of the non-literary languages, have no word for 'reading aloud'. They have borrowed the word 'bachna'. Now when we know the root and when in use find that some languages have maintained the root sound, it will effectuate in course of time structural similarity and regularity in words such as these and give rise to new words enriching the common core vocabulary of India. Thus 'bachna' in course of time, or first in the non literary languages can be written as 'vachna' which will make it easier for the new learners by bringing in a paradigm.

\[ \text{Bharati} \]
The imperative for this will be

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kurux</td>
<td>பின் பின்</td>
<td>பின் பின்</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamil</td>
<td>பின் பின்</td>
<td>பின் பின்</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindi</td>
<td>பின் பின்</td>
<td>பின் பின்</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is believed that nearly 60% of the lexical items of all Indian languages are common or have a common source. When one script is used all over India, the variations in pronunciation will merge in the social context of increased mobility and it can enhance communication between groups.

Not only lexical items, even in grammatical items we can see a common thread running through all Indian languages proving the postulates of language universals. We can examine just one item belonging to the languages Kurux and Tamil.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Kurux</th>
<th>Tamil</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We</td>
<td>தன்</td>
<td>தன்</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(leaving the listener)</td>
<td>(leaving the listener possessive)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We</td>
<td>பின் தன்</td>
<td>பின் தன்</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(including the listener)</td>
<td>(including the listener)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

/ தன் / is third person singular neuter pronoun in Tamil. / தன் / is third person singular feminine
pronoun in Kurux. Such similarities can merge to bring into existence a common form. /i/ is a common input for morphemes denoting feminine forms. These too have the potential to converge. Such structural generalizations brought in by treatment with Bharati script will help the speedy evolution of the language and simultaneously act as a centrifugal force to precipitate and bring together the common core in Indian languages. Though such a development can be allowed to follow its own natural course, the evolution can be quickened by research and development. The right type of governmental support will induce an outburst of activities integrating theoretical and methodological insights from linguistics, sociology, anthropology and modern technology. The desk top fusion of languages will consolidate the innovations of various fields in evolving a common language that can roughly represent any language of India by virtue of the shared items written in the common Bharati script.

The major incentive to this policy will be a promising future for individual languages; while maintaining their identity, they can contribute to the totality.

When people participate enthusiastically and willingly, a new base for national oneness will be formed, a new front to be unitedly attacked and conquered by the people at large, whether educated or uneducated, high or
low, bureaucrat or labourer. Word coinages from all corners, accepted by people, will become part of the language, for word coinage is not the sole prerogative of the educated and the elite. Coining of words can happen silently and stealthily, not even leaving a trace on its origin or it may happen with much fan-fare and publicity as in the case of the words 'glasnost' or 'prestroika'. But creation will begin at the grass-roots level, enhanced by planners and educationists. The hidden manoeuverability of languages can be used with insight to achieve a common goal. The local governments and the national government can extend a helping hand by giving technical co-operation. Writers and leaders will be the forefront language steerers.

For the vision to be transformed into reality, the implementation will have to be a continuous ongoing process. The media, especially the press has discussed elaborately the language issue, specitically pointing out the script controversy. Now, with a suggestion provided, it is its moral responsibility to extend support and co-operation.

When so much potential is available in our own languages, we should use it for something constructive. We should not lock ourselves up in the hypothetical eggshell of tradition when much is at stake for the modern man. We cannot afford to lag behind in the rat race of civilization leaving far behind our less privileged brethren. The time
is at hand when we have to make a clear decision, choose our priorities and chart out our course of action.

6.5 National Integration through Language Integration

National integration, in its truest sense can never be achieved but through the footstool and prelude of language integration. Language integration can not be realized but through a common script. A common script will not be accepted unless it is easy and scientific, suitable for any form of writing and does not create confusion for any language when applied. We are at the end of the long line, and there is real possibility that we can slowly go up and reach our goal.

On a practical level this process has to be started sometime, somewhere, with the active co-operation of the people and the government, the press and the educational institutions. Bihar is the place, and its people can be the harbingers of the new outlook.

The Kuruxs live in numerically strong communities. They have developed a tribal consciousness and their intelligenta meet the non-tribals on an equal footing. They have formed their own organizations and worship centres. They have formed Kurux Bhasa Pradhyopak Sahitya Parishad and Kurux Katha Jatra which are involved in numerous literary activities. The members are involved in
teaching the language in Bihar university. They are well aware of the problems of writing their language.

With the GEL and the Catholic Press, they know that the script they are using poses problems to the printers, the type setters and the common man. The superficial treatments have confused the problem further. It was Dr. Mintz, an anthropologist, principal and bishop, who realized the complexity of the problem and felt the need for full fledged research to solve this fundamental issue before launching out on an indigenous literacy mission. The present research actually has its genesis in the problem of the people and their identifying it as a problem to be solved with basic research.

There is a strong tribal leadership in Chotanagpur. Various agencies are more than willing to implement practical educational programmes for the upliftment of the people. The present condition of the tribal people at large cries out for immediate consideration. The results of wrong political and economic decisions and the unresolved socio-economic issues precipitated by continuing in the line of the British administration can only be rectified by a total change in outlook and revamping of our efforts using the existing infrastructure and resources.
Chotanagpur is an ideal fertile soil to start with implementation. It is a true platinum vial wherein we can attempt a language synthesis brought in by language convergence. The concept of diversity within India is reflected at a micro level here. "Culturally this is the only area in the entire country where the three major cultural streams - Aryan, Dravidian and Austroasian, represented through various languages - have converged to create a cultural synthesis of its own kind". (Munda, 1989)

Tibeto Burman languages and Bengali, Oriya and Chhattitsigahri, Bagheli Awadhi, Magadhi Bhojpuri and Maithili the dialects of eastern Hindi are contiguous. Santhal, Munda, Ho, Kharia and Birhor are the prominent Austro-Asiatic people. Kurux and Malto belong to the Dravidian family. Kurux is predominant in Chotanagpur while Malto is spoken in the Santhal Parganas. The Malto languages spoken by the Maler abound in Santhali, Bengali and Urdu loan words while Kurux has numerous items from Mundari and Hindi. As these languages had been non-literary so long, they were not mindful of their purity and provided a very conducive environment for intimate mixing of languages belonging to different linguistic families. The land has proved that as much as language diversity is a historical factor, language convergence is a reality. The long exploitation of the people and suppression of their languages have produced a desire in the people to protect and develop their own languages. As the fundamental problem
of these languages is "of existence, identity and development" (Keshari, 1982: 137) there is also a well pronounced attempt to form a link language. Sadani or Sadri had emerged as a link language or the language of parlance. But they need something more, which will be of real practical value in all walks of life. Languages are nothing more than products of time and space hatched through human demand. This is the place where we can put to shame puristic linguistic chauvinism and harness the program of unified script to tackle the daunting problem of the land, without upsetting the entire reformist applecart. This is the place where we have an ideal social circumstance - people are not literate, language is not standardized - providing a conducive atmosphere for language convergence.

The Bharati script need not be forced on any group. It can popularize itself by its own persuasive force in that it has the greatest advantage to meet the modern needs of:

(1) facility in reading and writing.

(2) speed in typing.

(3) viability for computer usage.

(4) ease in printing.

(5) applicability to all languages of India.
Bihar is said to have remained in a state of perpetual infancy, an area of darkness, decadent with frustrated, cynical and helpless people. The great advantages of the script in the fields of education, eradication of illiteracy, production of mass reading material, reduction in the heavy memory burden will give a definite edge for the people over the non-tribal groups. There will be a big leap in communication, promoting interaction among people. "The use of technology based media" will give it "tremendous reach to influence millions of human beings simultaneously". (Tewari, 1987: Preface) Primers in different languages can be printed with ease, on a large scale by indigenous printing agencies with generous financial help and subsidy from the government. No coercion will be needed to make it legally mandatory to use the script as it will provide possibilities of realistic culturally rooted mother-tongue education for the children. The drop out rates will drastically come down within a few years of its induction. More and more people will voluntarily accept it as its decisive advantages become known to the common man. We also feel that with the help rendered by the press, the press readership will increase and provide a window for the people to look at the outer world. When all this gains momentum, the languages involved will show clear signs of convergence defusing conflict and crisis among language groups. To forge a common language will become the common interest of
human kind and it can not but spread to other major languages.

In the beginning, the efforts will be crude and seem to be in a state of flux. On the surface level, there will be confusion as many languages will be written in the same way. At first we will have to print the name of the language at the corner of every page as in the electronics media. In the cataclysmic upheaval of light and sound the world was formed, so also in the cataclysm of language letters and sounds, a new national language will be forged, as efforts are stepped up in the fields of education and creative literary output.

We need not have any undue worries about the extinction of languages. Languages are nothing more than communication tools and should be treated as such. They need to be changed, modified and improved. Changes in language structures have already started centuries ago in Chotanagpur, we only add the catalytic agent of a common script to quicken the reactions already going on between these languages. A cultural synthesis has already been forged and now the confluence of the past trends and present efforts and tradition and modernization, buzzing with a spirit of innovation will end in the process of creation. The manifestation of cross fertilization between the Dravidian and Austro Asiatic, Dravidian and Aryan, Aryan and Austro Asiatic will be of great relevance to India today.
It will be a great historic event, born out of the joint endeavour of peoples, states and languages. We will see the genius of the Indian mind exploding into the frontiers of language unification and creation. Looking beyond into the India of the 21st century, we foresee a new language situation, ethnicity, statehood and nationality.

Though ancient, India is still a young independent country with great potential for change. By bringing together the cultures in the most scientific way of using common and complementary linguistic facts of the diverse Indian languages, the script will provide means for unity and a new found national identity.