PREFACE

The Chotanagpur region which is almost synonymous to the proposed Jharkhand State is a unique regional entity. Geologically, it is the north-eastern part of the Deccan plateau, is rich in a variety of mineral resources. Its hilly and undulating terrain with a tropical monsoon regime is full of forest resources, and has a high potential of hydro power resources. Despite its endowment with numerous natural resources, a careful and penetrative look at it reveals a number of stark contradictions. These contradictions are visualised in the nodal economic of development resulting in sharp intra-regional and inter-group disparities in the emergence of non-tribal capitalist and petty bourgeoisic interests leaving the lowly fed half-naked tribals as cheapest druge labour for them, in the spread of more developed non-tribal languages/ dialects leading to the growth of bilingualism and subsequently language shift among the tribals. These sociolinguistic phenomena significantly affecting the tribals population in a multi-cultural and multi-lingual region like the Chotanagpur needs to be examined in depth. Keeping the above aspects in mind, the main objective of the present study is to analyse the degree and direction of bilingualism and language shift among the tribes in a relatively more diversified region linguistically and furthermore the impact of social, economic and demographic variables upon these sociolinguistic phenomena in a spatio-temporal framework across the communities.

(xvi)
The study has been divided into six chapters including the first chapter 'Introduction' and the last chapter 'Summary of conclusion'. The first chapter which prepares the ground for research, deals with statement of the problem, objectives, conceptual framework, methodological aspects, overview of literature and a description of the study area. The second chapter works out the nature of linguistic diversity and involvement of major tribal-non-tribal linguistic groups at the lowest administrative units in the region. The third chapter explores the degree and directions of bilingualism among the tribes at various levels on the basis of both secondary and primary data. In a similar way, the fourth chapter highlights the nature and directions of language shift among the tribes. It also deals with partial language shift in terms of use of Hindi with varying intensity in different domains of tribals life. The fifth chapter explores the impact of a set of socio-economic variables on bilingualism and language shift by having discussed the nature and pace of social and economic development among the tribes. The sixth chapter presents a summary of conclusion.

It is hoped that this work will help in the understanding of the on-going social processes in the tribal areas of the country and will eventually contribute towards finding a solution of the country's tribal problems.