

Rebirth of a language

PALĪ – Parashar Līpī

Rationale and Benefits

Practical

Hindustani

Script

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(PALI) Practical Hindustani Script

The theory behind and the future ahead

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PALI

PALI is an Alphabet set composed of Latin letters and special symbols representing all phonemes of Hindustani (Hindi and Urdu) so PALI is Hindustani in Latin script.

PALI isn't a language.

Advantages of PALI

- PALI is a script for the Indian population less familiar with English to embrace the IT revolution, benefit and contribute towards it.
- PALI is an instrument empowering the Hindi speaking Indians to make Hindustani language as prestigious and practical as English.
- PALI can be implemented at no extra cost to individuals and the government. The only investment is the short time required to learn the new Script. Given a minimal set of intuitive rules, the time spent on learning the Script is almost negligible.
- In PALI, unlike Devnagri, the Latin letters can be written in upper (Capital) and lower (Small) case, making it possible to emphasize important words.
- PALI makes possible faster writing speeds since Latin supports cursive writing.

Beneficiaries of PALI

- Government institutions professing Hindi (or other native languages) in their workplaces, but helpless since their employees as well as general public prefer to use English due to the cumbersomeness of using Devnagri Script and the elitist feeling attached to English usage.
- Small and medium scale businesses undergoing computerization will be able to communicate with other businesses in Hindi.
- Urban and Village people, who can afford computer, but don't know English.
- Middle-aged and older people, who would have readily used the computer, but for the user interface in English and keyboard constraints, which render it impractical for using Hindi Script.
- People, who are more comfortable and expressive in Hindi.
- Email and chat users, who write Hindi words using Latin letters, with less desirable outcomes.

The rules of using PALI are so intuitive and simple that any person familiar with it could type any Hindustani (Hindi/Urdu) text using PALI's Latin alphabet. The "PALI2Devnagri2PALI" software would convert it to Devnagri Script to be read by people not yet familiar with PALI as well as convert any computer typed Devnagri Text to PALI.

This would be a tremendous gain for the govt. institutions where everyone having the knowledge of basic English alphabet can learn PALI and type Hindi using PALI script and convert it to Devnagri using the PALI2Devnagri2PALI software and print it out. Thus in no time, the usage of Hindi or other native languages in the govt.

institutions would receive the much needed impetus which the govt. has always been looking for.

Structure of PALI

Prerequisites for structuring the new script are:

1. The new Script should be derived from the standard Latin alphabet.
2. The new letters must represent all sounds (phonemes) of Hindi and Urdu.
3. The logical structure of Hindi should be preserved.
4. Each Hindi phoneme (basic sound) must be assigned a character.
5. All Hindi letters must have a unique equivalent in PALI.
6. Hindi letters consisting two or more phonemes should be denoted by the combination of those phonemes represented by Latin letters.
7. Standardized ways of representing complex Hindi letters must be illustrated.
8. The conversation of Hindi letters to PALI equivalents must be intuitively simple.
9. There should be a set of rules for the conversion, which must be easy to follow, memorize and recall.
10. By using the rules, any text written in the PALI should be pronounceable and understandable only one way.
11. All efforts should be made to keep the mapping between a phoneme and a Latin letter unaltered in future so that the further amendments do not introduce any conceptual change to the PALI.
12. There should be scope for further future amendments to the PALI.
13. PALI letters with transient mappings allowing the scope of future amendment should be listed and properly displayed.

Time needed for the new user to get accustomed to PALI

A 2-3 hours course followed by 1-2 weeks of use would be enough for people knowing English & Hindi or English & Urdu to train their mind get accustomed to PALI. After this period the mind would start perceiving (seeing) PALI words and sentences instead of individual letters at the subconscious level.

For people unfamiliar with Latin alphabet, time for learning PALI will constitute a fraction of the time usually spent on learning Hindi (Devnagri) alphabet.

For people unfamiliar with Hindi or English, time spent on learning PALI will be less than time usually spent on learning Hindi (Devnagri) alphabet.

Factors leading to the inception of Practical Hindustani Script (PALI)

Back in 2003, I caught a desire to understand the fundamental reasons behind the disparity between the developed and the developing countries. After lengthy pondering, analysis and introspection, the major reasons I was able to realize were:

1. Usage of mother tongue for national communication.

2. Ratio of Creative, Entrepreneurial and Executive people types in a given population.
3. Woman empowerment.

Here, we will discuss the significance of Mother tongue.

India has become a country without a language with a young population. The country has an inner core managing its administration which is legislative, judiciary and executive branches of the government. This inner core also contains infrastructure fields like Engineering, Medicine etc. In India this inner core is managed in English although not all the members of this Inner core are proficient in it. This may create deficient decision making. The inner core members, not proficient in the managing language will predominantly use emotion based decision making instead of thought based decision process, which might not always convert into best quality.

Language is the base of thinking. Words are carriers of ideas. Ideas denote concepts. Complex words denote complex concepts which make the thought process richer. Knowing a foreign language better than our mother tongue will never make us best quality thinkers. Almost always we will leap behind the native English speakers since due to their earlier start they will be ahead of us all the time.

We start learning our mother tongue from birth. After a few years some of us start learning English, a foreign language, from scratch. We learn complex concepts through the foreign language and cease learning our native language. In spite of that the majority of us continue to speak and think in our mother tongue, but we hardly deepen our understanding of it. We speak simplest words in our native language and many times can't express ourselves comprehensively in our native or the foreign language. We don't know deep complex words in the foreign language either.

The rest of us remain with either very poor knowledge of English or none at all. Since the Inner Core does not use our native language, there remains little reason to use it at all and our knowledge of our native language remains shallow.

The majority of population doesn't contribute in Nation building or policymaking and rarely becomes doctor, engineer or specialized professional. They are just left to live and vote.

Connection between Creativity and Language

Creative people perform tasks in a different way. A creative scientist would find innovative ways and a creative doctor would dream of performing the same operation more efficiently, causing lesser pain to the patient while speeding up the healing. A creative civil engineer would try to find out new ways of constructing durable roads, houses etc. There is a lot of innovation possible in every field with

every new innovation opening the scope for further innovations. Creativity requires free flowing thinking.

Rich thinking process results in generation of novel desires demanding fulfillment. If the available means don't comply, a new way needs to be found leading to invention. Invention is nothing more than a combination or alteration of one or more constituents or their properties to obtain a new element or property using creativity. Creativity is the ability to mentally simulate the alteration or interaction of one or more elements to produce a desired result. Creativity is propelled by desire and diligence. Adequately propelled Creativity, leads to innovation or invention. Developing nations drag on with their wish to become a developed country as a result of the scarcity of creative people, a wish that is not to be fulfilled until right steps are taken to enhance creativity.

Creativity flies best on the wings of deep knowledge of native language.

Status of English in India

Developed countries have their national language, which is the prime language for national, political and commercial communication and native to their majority. In India, we use an associate language, foreign to our masses. The national language of India is used inadequately. For instance if we split India's population into classes, the upper class speaks English and most of the middle and lower class speaks Hindi or other regional language. The English speaking class is literate because a foreign language requires study to be mastered. All of the uneducated population belongs to the regional language speaking masses. English on the other hand is seen as a symbol of education and culture. English literature is superabundantly available on any subject.

English is not native to Indian population, still all professional education, political and commercial communication is in English. It is considered an elitist language therefore children are forced to learn it as they would hold better chances of surpassing their counterparts unacquainted with it. Still, English with only 26 letters can boast to be the richest language in the world. It's essential that we start thinking of addressing the shortcomings in our National language and PALI could be a forceful reply to English.

There is no meaningful conversation possible between our classes till their mediums of thinking and expression are different and when people are unable to communicate, they cannot work effectively leading to declined productivity.

English, in the scenario of computers and IT

An IT Revolution is taking place in India. More and more people are starting to use computers. Majority of computer users are from higher or upper middle class who are educated in English and can afford computers. Yet, as the prices of computers are coming down, more and more people are able to purchase them. However, the

computers and their keyboards are optimized for English and unfortunately Devnagri script due to its complexity is quite hard to learn. On the other hand majority population belonging to towns and villages cannot use the optimized for English computers as they don't know English well enough, while typing in Devnagri is too complex and cumbersome. Humans don't choose complex ways when simpler options are available so people carry on using English even when their productivity remains low. As a result, the majority population is not able to enjoy the benefits of the IT revolution.

Computers are essentially the key vehicle to reach our National Goal of Developed India. We can't think of becoming a developed nation by 2020 when most of our people cannot use computers in their native language. The era for writing on paper is virtually ending. We are living in the computer era and if the computer is not suiting the language, the language must suit the computer.

The implementation of PALI (Parashar Lipi) is one of the essential steps towards becoming a developed country.

The significance of Words

Humans think with words or in other words, we cannot think without words. A huge problem of India could be solved by putting the emphasis on our native language. A language consists of two parts - grammar and words. If Grammar is a tree then Words are its leaves.

Here this idea needs to be explained. First of all, we need to understand the better choice out of the following two - To know a single language or to know multiple languages. Having a deep knowledge of a single language is much better than having shallow knowledge of many languages. True richness of a language comes from its words, which are much more than just a combination of letters and sounds. A word denotes a simple or complex idea, a concept. Ideas lead to judgment. Judgment leads to reasoning. Reasoning leads to decisions. Lack of complex ideas or words results in hampered thinking. The more concepts a person is versed with, the richer would be her thinking, analysis, reasoning and judgment. It could be illustrated in simple terms. For instance a person knows 30000 words of his native language. Another person knows 15000 words each of two different languages. By comparing we find that the first person knowing 30000 words of his native language will possess sharper thinking, versed with much more concepts and ideas. On the other hand, the second person knowing 15000 words each of two different languages will know just the synonyms of the words of the same concept. As mentioned earlier, richness of our thinking depends on the quantity and complexity of concepts, denoted by words. When we consider the time spent on learning languages we find that each new word requires some time to be mastered, therefore despite both the persons having spent roughly equal time on learning equal number of words, the sharpness and richness of ideas of the First Person's is twice of that of the Second Person. Knowing thoroughly a single language is better than knowing 10 different languages and the precious time needs to be invested in

deepening the knowledge of native language.

An effective way to promote our native language is the implementation of PALI which promotes use of the native language.

National Language of India

Our country requires deeper communication between its citizens, the lack of which is affecting our development.

Due to the absence of a single common native language, most people of our country can't effectively communicate with each other. Our quasi-national language Hindi is scarcely used in the official and business communications.

Nations are cohered by a common language. In most countries, a common language spoken by the majority holds them together. In many large countries there are different local languages still most of the people communicate in their National language. In the developed countries children grow speaking their native language continuously learning new words. Throughout their lives their native language vocabulary keeps building and the larger the vocabulary of a person, the richer is his thinking since words are the carriers of ideas.

However, in India majority of children grow speaking their native language but suddenly a foreign language "English" at some stage of their life is imposed upon them. A lot of children are not comfortable with this change. They are required to learn from scratch words connected to different phonetic representations and used under a new grammatical structure. This precious time spent on learning another language should be spent on consolidating the in-depth knowledge of the native language.

Hindi is spoken by roughly 30% of Indians that cannot be seen as an absolute majority in our country. Non-Hindi speaking population maintains that keeping English as the de facto national, political and commercial language makes the chances of all Indians equal, whereas using Hindi exclusively and officially in the national scenario would provide the Hindi speakers advantage over their non-Hindi speaking counterparts which seems a rational argument. On the other hand, we will not find a single country amongst the developed countries where national language is not spoken by the majority of its populace. That is an interesting paradox, which can be solved by PALI.

While admitting that integrating our whole populace through a common language is a difficult task, we can start with empowering the people speaking the Indo-Aryan family of languages by offering them a credible medium of communication and expression. PALI would go a long way in empowering and uniting our people. Promoting Hindustani (Hindi/Urdu) and other Indo-Aryan languages will bring distant languages closer.

Nations who think, communicate and work in their native language are the most productive.

The language issue has plenty of solutions and the most optimal solution being offered here would not create any monetary burden on our government, people or economy. Being proposed here is the best way to help our underprivileged population join the mainstream of IT revolution, the gateway to unlimited knowledge. 21st century is the century of knowledge.

By adapting Hindustani (Hindi, Urdu) to the computer keyboard using PALI, we would be able to convert the "Developed India 2020" Goal into reality.

Comparison of Devnagri and English in light of computer & IT revolution

With the advent of computer and its invasion into all fields of life, the disadvantage of Hindi has immensely increased due to its harder typing. In comparison, English, with its 26 letters doesn't pose such problem. Obviously, learning typing with the English alphabet is much easier. English is popular due to its simplicity. At present, English is the richest language in the world and in India it is the de facto National Language. People make a language richer by using it. For example the Israeli Jews resurrected Hebrew considered as a practically dead language and it is getting richer day by day.

Spoken language is dynamic and word pronunciations continuously change. On the other hand written language is static. Languages where words are spoken differently than the sounds of their letters are written are considered as changed languages. As centuries pass, the pronunciation drifts more and more from the initial sounds of the letters. However, Hindi is a largely unchanged language. There disparity between the written and spoken Hindi is not big. The Devnagri script comprehensively reflects all the phonemes (sounds) of Hindi.

Since alphabets are just visual representations of sounds (phonemes), alphabets or scripts don't indicate the richness of a language. Some letters denote basic sounds while other letters, known as digraphs, denote combinations of basic sounds. English uses Latin alphabet which consists of 26 letters that could be written in small or capital. Hindi is written using Devnagri script which consists of 49 letters. However, practically in addition to the 49 letters there are half letters, matras (vowel signs), combined letters, etc. A typical Devnagri font on the computer consists of a minimum of 71 different characters. A character can be an "Akshar" or a "Matra" or half letter, etc. Here we should understand that 71 is a minimized number of characters obtained through excluding letter combinations which could be denoted by other ways. A comprehensive Devnagri Font would contain even more characters with the possibility of a total around 145 letters. Due to the complexity of typing in Devnagri, even the computer shops charge higher prices for Hindi typing jobs, while English jobs are cheaper. Devnagri script is not quite practical for computer typing.

It might be contested that the hieroglyph languages such as Chinese, Korean or Japanese pose greater level of difficulty to type than Hindi, still those countries didn't switch to English. The governing core of these countries always used their own languages and developed a system corresponding to the demands of their National Languages.

In India people had the option of choosing between English or other Indian languages and they choose the easier option.

Work being done on the Hindi front in India

Much work is being carried out in creating Hindi Fonts and softwares for translation between English and other Indian Languages. However, though these efforts need to be hailed, the problem would still remain unsolved as Indian native languages are not being used in real life.

Fortunately, PALI shall effectuate positive changes in the social, political and educational environment in India, and sooner than we expect.

Positive societal changes to be effectuated by PALI

Most of the Northern and Central India speaks Hindustani. Written representation of the spoken Hindustani language differs with Hindus using Devnagri Script and the Muslims using modified Arabic Script for the same language. The huge benefits of using PALI would facilitate people belonging to different religions unite and adapting a neutral Script (PALI) for communication.

USA writes about Hindustani language

Source: The World Factbook -- India.htm

Languages: English enjoys associate status but is the most important language for national, political, and commercial communication; Hindi is the national language and primary tongue of 30% of the people; there are 14 other official languages: Bengali, Telugu, Marathi, Tamil, Urdu, Gujarati, Malayalam, Kannada, Oriya, Punjabi, Assamese, Kashmiri, Sindhi, and Sanskrit; **Hindustani is a popular variant of Hindi/Urdu spoken widely throughout northern India but is not an official language.**

Countries, which adopted a new language script.

In world practice, there are examples of countries adapting the Latin alphabet replacing their previous alphabet. The countries adopted the new alphabet set and usage of the old alphabet in govt., official and legal communication had been prohibited.

PALI principally differs from the mentioned instances as we propose to use it as a

supplementary alphabet set for the current North Indian (Indo-Aryan) languages. We are not proposing to replace the current alphabet set of the mentioned languages.

Turkey: The most glaring example has been demonstrated by Turkey. The President of Turkey Mustafa Kemal Atatürk was the father of the Turkish language revolution. On October 29, 1923, the Turkish Grand National Assembly proclaimed the Republic of Turkey, Atatürk was named its president, Ankara its capital and the modern state of Turkey was born. The language revolution (*dil devrimi*) officially began in May 1928, when numbers written in Arabic were replaced with their Western equivalents. In November the Grand National Assembly approved a new Latin alphabet that had been devised by a committee of scholars. Many members of the assembly favored gradually introducing the new letters over a period lasting up to five years. Atatürk, however, insisted that the transition last only a few months, and his opinion prevailed. With chalk and a portable blackboard, he traveled throughout the country giving writing lessons in the new Latin alphabet in schools, village squares, and other public places to people whose illiteracy rate went suddenly 100 percent. On January 1, 1929, it became unlawful to use the Arabic alphabet to write Turkish.

Tatarstan: Tatarstan's schools have dropped Cyrillic in favor of the Latin alphabet for written work in the national language. Not only does this shift reverse a Soviet-era effort to link the Tatars more closely to the Russian nation, but it also makes it easier for the Tatars to gain direct access to European culture. Tatarstan's Education Ministry announced this step at the start of the new academic year and its spokeswoman argued that the return to the Latin script both permits a better representation of the national language's sound patterns and will help Tatar students learn English and other European languages. But beyond these pedagogical considerations, this change of alphabets both reflects and promotes an even more fundamental shift in the social and political orientation of that Middle Volga nation.

Azerbaijan: When the Republic of Azerbaijan became independent, it immediately switched alphabets - from Cyrillic to Latin [December 1991]. Since then, the country has been dealing with the complex issue of how best to educate and publish in this new script.

Popularization of the Script

The Indian youth shall initiate the use of PALI. They will learn the basic rules for PALI and start using the Script in everyday mails and chats with their friends.

Due to the extensive use of PALI by the youth, more people would come to know about it. The computer Keyboard manufacturers and sellers may include the new Script booklet with their Keyboards. Every new computer would bring in the possibility for the owner to learn the PALI. The base of population versed with PALI would increase with each sold Keyboard.

People with knowledge of PALI would begin informing other people about the Script and the general pool of users of the Script would reach substantial dimensions. Many schools and institutions would start including a 2-3 hour course to familiarize their students with PALI enabling them to use Hindustani on the Computer.

The study of Hindustani will receive new impetus and all Government and private schools would teach their students PALI. New technical literature could be published using PALI. English words having no equivalents in Hindi/Urdu shall be converted to Hindustani through PALI. These English and other foreign words would be added to Hindustani vocabulary using their phonetic interpretation depending on their neutral Indian pronunciation. PALI Script for other Indian languages shall be created. It would mark the culmination of the Project demonstrating its successful implementation. The PALI usage rules would have been firmly established. A PALI Regulatory Board would have been elected for promoting it and resolving any literary conflicts.

PALI would see the Rebirth of languages which have become subordinate to English in their own land.
