Premchand: 
Urdū hindī aur hindustānī (1934)

Dhanpat Ray Shrivastava, who wrote under the pen-name ‘Premchand’, is the single most important figure in the development of a mature narrative style in both Hindi and Urdu. Premchand was born in 1880 near Benares, the son of a village postmaster; he was of the Kayasth caste, and he received the education in Urdu and Persian which qualifies the Kayasth for his traditional role as a record-keeper, scribe, or clerk. Premchand worked as a schoolmaster, then as an inspector of schools; around 1920 he began a literary career, first in Urdu, then changing to Hindi because of his awareness of the emergence of a growing readership whose literacy was in the Devanagari script.

Besides prose fiction, Premchand also wrote a substantial number of essays and journalistic pieces, whose language could be either Sanskritized or Persianized according to subject. His journalistic prose was sometimes marked by a certain banality of style, and English thought patterns often show through the veneer of Indian idiom.

The essay Urdū hindī aur hindustānī addresses the problem of an appropriate style of speech for promotion as a national language. Premchand followed the Gandhian ideal of a middle-of-the-road Hindustani vernacular, as against the more specialized style of Hindi and Urdu; but he did not always follow his own prescriptions for the avoidance of a heavily Sanskritized register.

The passage begins by presenting the views of those who favour a laissez-faire attitude to the separate development of Hindi and Urdu respectively. Premchand condones such a view when the languages are considered at the regional level, on a par with other vernaculars such as Bengali and Marathi; but he draws a distinction between this function of Hindi/Urdu and the function of a national language, which he says must be a compromise free from an excessive reliance on either Sanskrit or Perso-Arabic loanwords. His main argument is a practical one — that a national language must be accessible and widely comprehensible, and that pedantic etymological considerations have no place in this discussion. By totally ignoring the vital role played by cultural affinities in the choice of linguistic register, Premchand ingenuously arrives at the simplistic conclusion that ‘Hindustani’ should be adopted for the national role; and by a sleight of hand he recommends that the name of this language might just as well be ‘Hindi’.

देश में ऐसे आदमियों की संख्या कम नहीं है जो उन्हें और हिंदी की अलग बलग और स्वतंत्रता उन्नति और विकास के मार्ग में बाधक नहीं होना चाहते। उन्होंने यह मान लिया है कि आर्थम इन दोनों के स्वरूपों में छाए जो कुछ एकता और समानता रही हो, लेकिन फिर भी इस समय दोनों की दोनों में जिस रास्ते पर जा रही है, उसे देखते हुए इन दोनों में मेल और एकता होना असंभव ही है। प्रत्येक भाषा का एक प्राकृतिक प्रवृत्ति होती है। उद्दूँ का फारसी और अरबी के साथ स्वाभाविक सम्बंध हैं, और हिंदी का संस्कृत तथा प्राकृत के साथ उसी प्रकार का सम्बंध है। उनकी यह प्रवृत्ति हम किसी भी रोक नहीं सकते। फिर इन दोनों को आपस में मिलाने का प्रयत्न करके हम कौन व्यक्ति इन दोनों को हालत पहुँचाएं?

यदि उद्दूँ और हिंदी दोनों के अपना आपको अपने जन्म स्थान और प्रचार क्षेत्र तक ही परिभाषित रखें तो हमें ऐसी प्राकृतिक वृद्धि और विकास के सम्बंध में कोई आपत्ति न हो। बैंग्ला, मराठी, गुजराती, तमिल, तेलुगु और कन्नड आदि प्रांतीय भाषाओं के सम्बंध में हमें किसी प्रकार की चिंता नहीं है। इसलिए कहा कि बावजूद अंदर छाए जिनमें संस्कृत, अरबी या लैटिन आदि भरती चले। उन भाषाओं के लेख आदि स्वयं ही इस बात का निर्णय कर सकते हैं। परन्तु उद्दूँ और हिंदी की बात इन सबसे अलग है। यहाँ तो दोनों ही भारतवर्ष की राष्ट्रीय भाषा कहलाने का दावा करती हैं। प्रशंसा के अपने व्यक्तिगत स्वभाव में राष्ट्रीय भाषाओं की पूर्वी नहीं कर सकीं और इसीलिए संस्कृत रूप में स्वयं ही उनका सुप्रीम और मेल आर्थम हो गया। हम दोनों का वह समाहित व्यस्त उत्तर हो गया जिसे हम बड़ा ठीक तोर पर हिंदुस्तानी जवाब कहते हैं। नारायण हाथ होता है और भारतवर्ष की राष्ट्रीय भाषा न तो बहुत ही हो सकती है जो अरबी और फारसी के अप्रतिम तथा अपरिवर्तित होने के भार से लड़ती है और न ही हिंदी ही हो सकती है जो संस्कृत के भाषा है। न ही उद्दूँ ही हो सकती है जो संस्कृत के भाषा है। न ही उद्दूँ ही हो सकती है जो संस्कृत के भाषा है। न ही उद्दूँ ही हो सकती है जो संस्कृत के भाषा है। न ही उद्दूँ ही हो सकती है जो संस्कृत के भाषा है। न ही उद्दूँ ही हो सकती है जो संस्कृत के भाषा है। न ही उद्दूँ ही हो सकती है जो संस्कृत के भाषा है। न ही उद्दूँ ही हो सकती है जो संस्कृत के भाषा है। न ही उद्दूँ ही हो सकती है जो संस्कृत के भाषा है।
1 sankhyā kam nahin hai... badhak nahin hona cahte: the double negative is inelegant; for a similar lapse of style cf. the repetition of 9-10 in donon ko.

2 unnati aur vikās: 'progress and development'. Premchand shows in full measure the H propensity for pairing nouns (usually S loans) of similar or identical meaning: cf. 3 ekta aur samānā, 4 mel aur ekta, 9 jann sthān aur pracār kṣetra, 10 vṛddhi aur vikās, 16 sahyog aur mel, 21 pakṣapatī aur samarthak, etc.; cf. the U convention of pairing PA words linked with the copular o (842).

5-6 prākrtyik... svabhāvik: both mean 'natural'; both are calques from E.

5 pravṛtti: 'tendency, leaning, predilection' — the word suggests 'motion towards', and is thus well chosen to describe the tendency of H and U to look to S and AP respectively for a supply of loanwords.

6 aur hindi kā sanskrit tathā prākrty ke sāth: this phrase demonstrates the distinction between the two words for 'and': aur is a true cj. with a wide range of functions, while tathā simply compounds syntactically parallel nouns within the phrase.

9 jann sthān aur pracār kṣetra tak hī parimit rakhe: the function of tak is restrictive here.

10 hamein... koi āpatti na ho: 'we would have no objection': the subj. suggests that this is hypothetical, and that in fact an objection is about to be raised.

12 cahe jitini sanskriti... bharti calem: 'go on absorbing as much S... as they like'.

14 yahān to: as so often, yahān has a general demonstrative sense, 'as regards this situation', rather than a specifically spacial reference.

15 rāśtriya bhāṣā: adj. rāśtriya suggests a rather less official status and technical implication than does the nominal compound rāṣtra bhāṣā. The distinction can be imitated in E by exploiting the distinction of upper and lower case letters in 'national language' and 'National Language' respectively.

16 unkā sahyog aur mel ārambh ho gayā: this is a misrepresentation of the actual process, since Hindustani is not a product of a growing together of H and U, but rather the natural state of the vernacular unmodified by the H and U camps.

18 bhāratvārs kī rāśtriya bhāṣā...: the situation described here as unthinkable has become the status quo in Pakistan and India respectively in the half-century since Premchand was writing.

20 ladī rahi hai: compare this construction with the semantically similar ext. ptc. construction of 21 ladī huī hoī hai.

21 āmne sāmne: 'face to face': āmne is a phonetic imitation of sāmne, 'opposite', but unlike most 'echo-words' holds first position in the phrase; cf. ās-pās, E 'dingle-dangle'.

23 jiskā ādhār sarv-sāmāny bodhgyamatā ho - jise sab log sahaj mēn samajh sakein: 'whose basis should be universal comprehensibility — which everybody could easily understand'. Though here deliberately and somewhat playfully underlining the message of the sentence, this use of a second register to gloss a first is a fairly common feature of H prose. Note how the change of register from formal to simple is here accompanied by a change of syntax from simple to complex (i.e. from adj. clause with simple verb to subject-object clause with adverbially qualified modal verb).

24 kyon parvā karne lagi: the perfect tense expresses a hypothetical situation, as in a conditional sentence. (The f. subject of the verb is rāśtriya bhāṣā.)

27 hindu, musalmaan, panjabi, bangali...: in the context of a discussion of HU language register, the designations 'Hindu' and 'Muslim' form natural categories alongside those of the regions.

28 mahāraśtriya: the S name for and etymon of 'Marathi'. The federal state of 'Maharashtra' did not exist in Premchand's time, though the term itself has long been used to designate the cultural area.

29 kahān se nikla hai aur kahān se āyā hai: nikalan relates to origin or etymology, ānā to subsequent areas of usage.
with characteristic ingenuousness, Premchand proposes a wildly simplistic interpretation of the world's linguistic situation in order to make a rhetorical point. The fact that the language of Iran is called *farsi*, not *irani*, is conveniently overlooked.

the seriousness of Premchand's argument degenerates even further with this sentence, which begs the question in an astonishingly brazen manner anticipating the gross misrepresentation of the final sentence of the passage.

'ancient times', here meaning the late medieval period; the commonplace telescoping of historical time in Indian tradition often results in relatively recent dates having great antiquity attributed to them.