

No two languages are exactly the same in their visual manifestation. We

expect each system to be relative to the particularities of that language.

ये विभिन्न भाषाओं के दृश्य आविष्कार एक जैसा नहीं होता।  
प्रत्येक भाषा के अपने भाषिक विशेषताओं से सापेक्षिक

These individual language based typographic systems demonstrate, when

संबंध रहता है। इन भाषाओं पर आधारित मुद्रण पद्धतियाँ  
एक दूसरे की तुलना में, व्यक्तिगत मुद्रण प्रयोग की प्रकृति

compared one with another, the individual idiosyncracies of typographic

विशेषताएँ (मुद्राक्षर, अवबोधन, संकल्पन आदि) प्रत्येक  
भाषा को प्रभावित करती हैं। प्रत्येक भाषा पर आधारित पद्धति

practice (space, typeface, layout etc) pertaining to the particular lang-

में, भाषा और मुद्राक्षर संबंध, तथा उनके मंगल्य संकल्पन से  
व्यक्तियुक्त होती है। प्रत्येक भाषा के सामग्री के अनुसार ही

uage Each language based system indicates the relationship between the

संबंधित व्यवस्था के लिए, इस प्रकारकी दो पद्धतियों के  
अंतर से प्रत्येक भाषा के लिए और उनके अंतर्गत संबंध की

language in use, the typefaces used and their optimum layout in order to

रखना है, प्रत्येक भाषा का प्रभावी साध्य होता है।

achieve maximum readability. In designing for bilingual material, there-

fore the problems of ordered arrangement require use of two such

systems, one for each language, then structuring a relationship between

["बिगबिल सैन्डिज" वॉल्यूम २१, नंबर १, डिसेंबर १९८७ में  
प्रकाशित ऑलिवर क्रफोर्ड के "बिगबिल सैन्डिज टाइपोग्राफी" इस  
लेख के अंश का अनुवाद।]

them so that efficient communication for each language takes place.

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## Bilingual Typography - Its problems and approaches

A report by Dipti Vaidya



SPECIAL PROJECT

BILINGUAL TYPOGRAPHY - ITS PROBLEMS AND  
APPROACHES

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Submitted in partial fulfilment of the  
requirement for the Degree of Master of  
Design in Visual Communication.

by

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POWAI, BOMBAY 400 076

### APPROVAL SHEET

Research Project titled ' Bilingual Typo-  
graphy its problems and Approaches' by  
Dipti Vaidya is approved in partial fulfil-  
ment of the requirement for a Master's  
Degree in Visual Communication.

CHAIRMAN .....

EXTERNAL EXAMINER .....

INTERNAL EXAMINER .....

GUIDE .....

CO-GUIDE .....



### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to my guide Prof.R.K.Joshi for his valuable guidance which has inspired me and has given me an insight into this field.



## CONTENTS

- INTRODUCTION
- BILINGUISM AND ITS VARIOUS ASPECTS
- MY PROJECT
- CONCLUSIONS
- BIBLIOGRAPHY



## INTRODUCTION

### TYPOGRAPHY

Typography can be described as designing for the efficient communication of words which A wishes to transmit to B. This would entail the production of new typefaces and the use of existing typefaces in an ordered arrangement whereby efficient communication may take place. In order to understand language, the typographer needs linguistic skills regarding its structure and the various uses of language which determine meaning as used by A and B

### BILINGUISM

Bilingualism means words which underscore the linguistic contact between two languages. Bilingualism mixes two cultures together, binds them in more stronger ties for a better understanding. The same thought/ideas are shared by two different audience side by side simultaneously which gives a feeling of oneness. Bilingualism is the means of an healthy exchange. It can prove to be a important tool to unite



a country and countries for a better world. //

Bilingualism affects the smallest units of language sounds of course, but also the characters of type used to print letters.

The two languages of a bilingual text can remain in perpetual confusion and conflict. The risk of typographical conflict will be all the greater if the languages share the same writing system. Each identical sound signal, accented letter, word picture and letter group has a different role in each language. The same letter shapes appear differently in different languages.

Thus in designing a bilingual page, the problem of language must be of a prime consideration. Looking at bilingualism from the cost point of view, the consumption of a bilingual page is less because of less amount of papers required and also less circulation of the copies.



The two languages used here are English which will be termed as language A and Hindi which will be termed as language B, The script of language A as  $A_1$  and script of language B as  $B_1$  throughout the whole report.

1. CONTENT  
2. MEDIUM  
3. FORM

As bilingualism involves translation of one language into another, it can be classified into four categories according to its content aspect. //

This involves word to word translation and hence forth the message/information is exactly the same. This is directed to two audience and involves two authors.

## B1

[illegible][illegible]

## A1

[illegible]

B1

---

---

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---

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## A1

[illegible]

B1

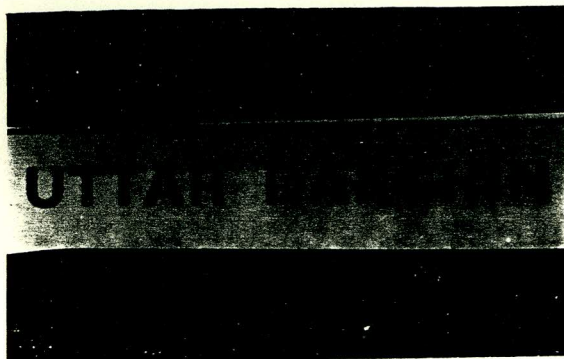
[REDACTED]

Here only a part of information is given in the other language. This mainly depends upon the reader/audience, state, circulation etc. The biggest drawback in this is that part of the audience is getting less information and this may lead to ambiguity in terms of the information to one reader. In print media, it reduces the cost consumption tremendously as the typeset matter is less and so is the amount of paper too. This also involves two authors and is directed to two audience.

## ESSENCE OF THE CONTENT

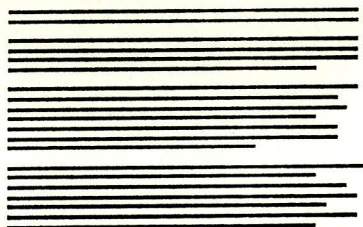
1/ In this the essence/summary of the whole information is in one language and the detailed information in the other. / In this the advantage is this that the information reaching both the audience is almost the same and the overall consumption of paper, printing, typeset matter is also less. In this two authors and two audiences are involved.





## BISRIPTAL - TRANSLITERATION

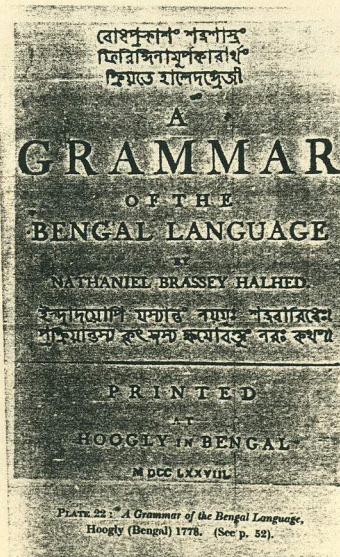
A1 , B1



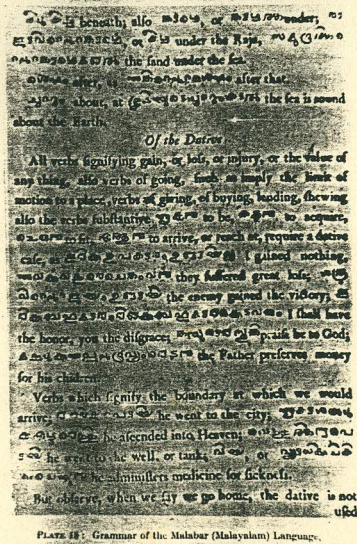
## BISRIPTAL/TRANSLITERATION

In this the involvement of both the languages is there but one is in the spoken form and the other is in the written form. // This is directed to one audience, the one who knows the written form of the language. For example 'Uttar Dakshin' in the spoken form is in language B but the script is A<sub>1</sub>. This is an example of transliteration. In this the cost consumption is reduced to half. As the audience is one this involves only one author.





(a)



(b)

## MEDIUM WISE

Taking the media aspect, bilingualism can be further classified according to

### \*\*PRINT MEDIA

Which broadly covers -

- BOOKS
- GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS
- MAGAZINES
- PACKAGING

### BOOKS

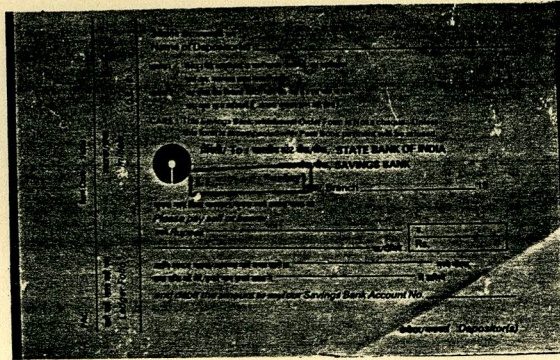
BILINGUISM is existing in India since the advent of printing in India of which we have records. These are a few examples of early printing in India.

In example (a) the two languages have an unequal distribution. The weights are different and the styles too are not matching but the overall appearance of the page is eye-catching and there is no collision or noise among the languages and the layout.

Example (b) is a sample of unequal weightage.



## GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS

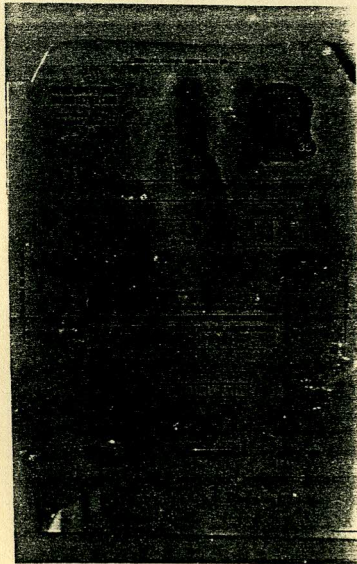


(c)

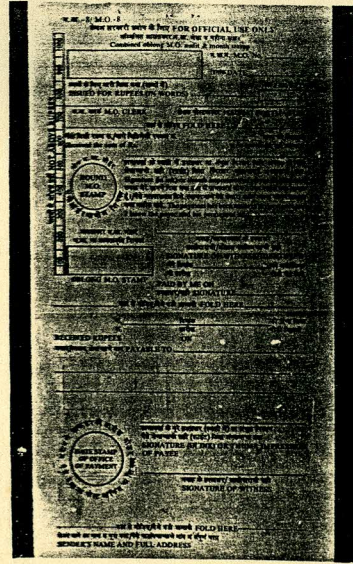
// In a multilingual country like India the government was the first to be aware of the need of bilingualism and all the major government departments which included public and private sectors like post-offices, Banks, Railways, Airways, Lottery tickets, Cinema etc started coming out with bilingual publications.// A few examples of the Government publications are as follows.

(c) and (d) are good examples of design where the size, style and weight of both the languages has been tried to match which discards noise and gives it a neater look.

In example (e) there is a lot of information in both the languages and the size and style of the letterforms is also matching and hence the whole design looks full of visual noise. Hence we see that with lot of information, bilingualism. In one format can create visual noise if not designed properly.



(d)



(e)





(f)

## MAGAZINES

Airflight magazines like swagat and Namaskar came bilingually first with just one or two articles with the approach of a bilingual page. At present more articles are coming bilingually with the approach of a bilingual page and also with the approach of one language - one page.



(g)

## PACKAGING

Packaging is another area where bilinguism plays a very important role. These are a few examples of packaging where the style has been tried to match.





(h)



(i)



(j)

## \* FABRICATED MEDIA

Bilingualism can be categorized according to the fabricated media which includes

- Road signs
- Information boards
- Shop boards

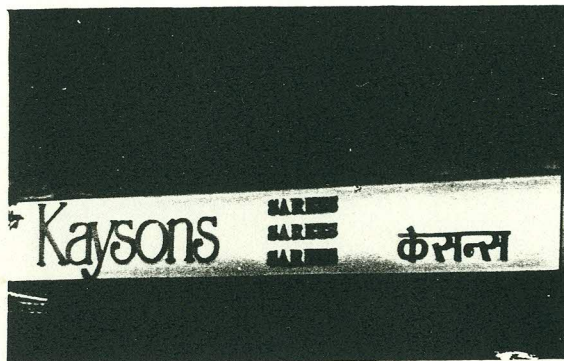
There are various examples of bilingualism and trilingualism on the street which serve the function of Road Information signage, shop boards to guide the public around. The fabricated media has a very vital role to play. For sinages it is very important to have a very legible face, in a big size, so that it can be read by people from the desired distance. Both the languages should have equal prominence so that the attention does not shift to the more prominent one and also both should be legible from the same distance.

A few good examples are shown have where both the languages share equal weightage, are highly legible and have no visual noise. The sinage in example (j) has a small print area and with both the languages and the type size it is creating noise.

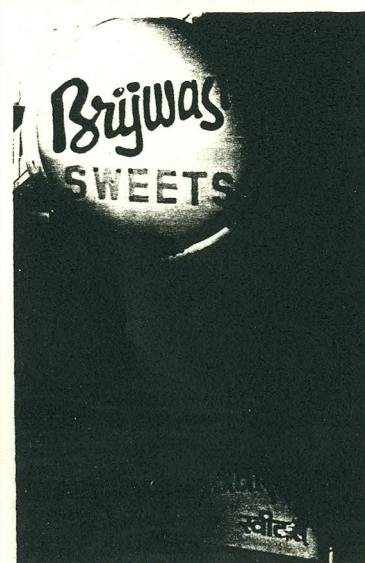




(k)



(l)



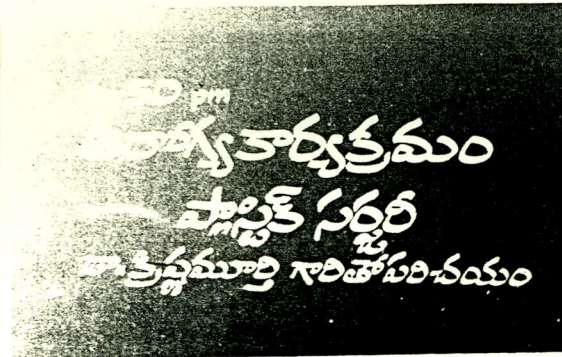
(m)

shop boards on the other hand carry unequal weightage where one language dominates the other by its size and colour. In such cases one audience is at a loss and has to come closer to read the information while the other is benefited by reading it from a long distance.

Picture (l) is an example of unequal weightage. Audience B has to go closer to make it sure whether its a saree shop, general stores or a resturant. There is at times over exaggeration by repetition like in this sarees is written 3 times, but this repetition is also taken as an element of design sometimes.

Picture (m) is another example where the shop board is on two different levels for both the audience. Here again audience A is benefited as the board is quite high with the name in a bigger type size whereas the other board which is for audience B is at a lower height with a smaller type size. In this case the audience face the problem of visibility.





(n)



(o)



(p)

### \*PROJECTED MEDIA

This includes-Television titles-film titles, film subtitles, TV advertisements.

Projected media is also on two levels

- bilingualism on a plain surface
- bilingualism on an image.

Fig (n) is an example of unequal weightage and the titles is coming on a plain surface. Here only the time is for audience A and the rest of the programme is for another audience C who knows Telugu. Legibility is not suffered here as it is coming on a plain surface where as in example (O) The bilingual title is coming on an image and legibility suffers a lot depending upon the colour of the letters and the colours of the background. This is the biggest drawback in projected media on a image.

## PROCESSED MEDIA

This includes the computerized bilingualism where bilingual compugraphic letter forms are created on a display screen. If language A fits in 8 dots and is creatively transliterated to language B, some letter forms like ह, छ end up into a problem and become a mess. These are some of the software, hardware problems associated with the processed media.

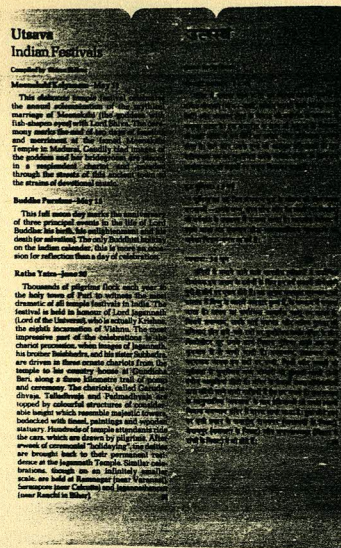


## FORMWISE

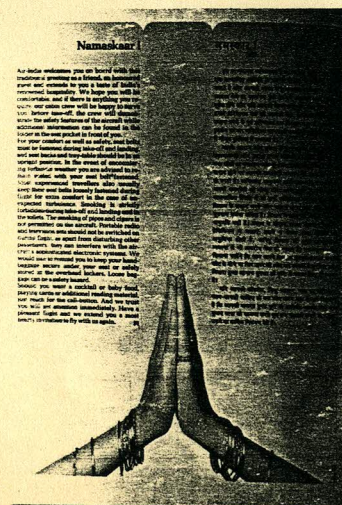
Another important factor of Bilingualism lies in the Form of the languages which includes, structure and the strokes of a language. No two languages are the same in their visual manifestation. No two languages can ever manifest themselves in precisely the same visual shape even if they use the same alphabets since the particular frequency of letters associated one with another is distinct and determines the visual presentation of the language, its shape and format. //

// In combining any two languages into the typographic harmony, the designer will have to deal with the copy of different length (representing the same message) differing in the size of the average word, sentence and paragraph, and differing in the incidence of certain letters of the alphabet, characteristic of each language. //





(q)



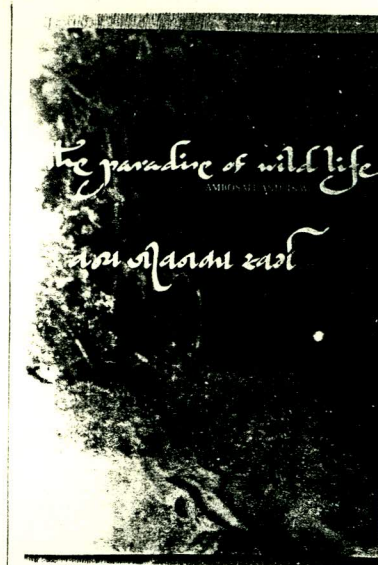
(r)

The factors which constitute the FORM of a language are.

## SIZE OF THE TYPE FACE

Even though the point size is the same, there's a variation in the x-height of the letter forms of both languages and thus the height of copy also varies. The x-height of Devanagiri is less than that of Roman but form wise the strokes of Devanagiri are very close and compact which gives it a denser look. A certain amount of manipulation can be done to match the size of the copy by increasing inter line spacing and inter paragraph spacing like is fig (r)





(5)

## STYLE

In a bilingual page the style of both languages should also match to a certain extent to maintain the continuity and visibility in the text so that it has no strong demarcation. But sometimes the styles of script A and B are matched to make them look exactly alike and then it causes confusion (fig s).

## WEIGHT

Weight (greyness) gives another dimension to the text which is of density. There are many weights, available in script A like plain, medium, Bold, ~~demi~~ Bold, extrabold but only two weights are available for script B. To give equal importance to both the text, the densities should match otherwise the entire weight shifts to the more denser area and makes it more prominent and dominating. In order to obtain a typographical balance between both the weights of the two scripts, type size, style and interline can be changed accordingly.



## Colour

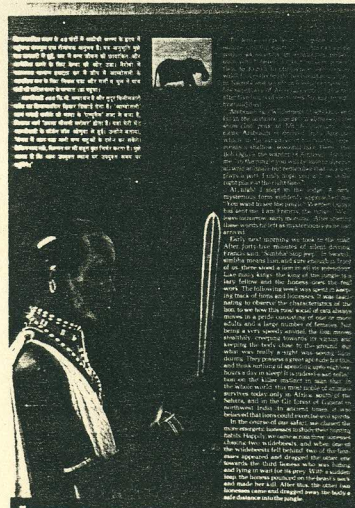
4 Colour plays a vital role in bringing emphasis to the written matter. The densities can be matched by colour thus showing the design principles like emphasis, contrast, Dominance etc.

## Volume/Quantity

4 Volume or quantity speaks about the layout in general which includes typeface, style, size and weight etc. If the copy of one language is bigger than the other due to the reasons mentioned earlier the volume of the whole page shifts on that side.

## Image

4 In a bilingual page if an image/picture is there, the problem of placing the caption for the image and placing the image comes. The design should not look crowded and at the same time the images should be defined properly in both language.





## MY PROJECT

✓ In this project the concentration is mainly on print media and that too on a bilingual page ie. where both the languages are coming with and without the image. In this, the text is the extracts selected from the article Bilingual Typography by Alistair Crawford in visible Language Volume XXI, winter 1987. This text is then translated into Hindi and then the various possibilities of a bilingual page has been explored. The main objective is this that how interesting and creative bilingual typography can be evolved in terms of its layouts and design principles. ✓



## Conclusions

// Bilingual Typography has its own very important significance nationally, culturally and socially. If applied properly it can open new dimensions to the signage designs, graphic design and all other designs involving print. It reaches to greater number of audience and is the means of a proper and healthy exchange. The main problem for which it is still not very popular specially in print media is because it involves two authors, two proofreaders and two composers which makes it very expensive and also to find all these experts together and to work in a team is extremely difficult. Bilingual Typography in future when applied properly can serve as an important asset to print media and communications.

Everyday the demand to have Government official work bilingually is increasing (enclosed circular of IIT) and thus with this we see that typography now should be treated more in terms with a bilingual approach. //



INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, BOMBAY.

No. GA-2/Hindi/14/89

Genl. Admn. Section

17 March, 1989

C I R C U L A R

This is to bring to the attention of all concerned that time and again the Government of India is emphasizing on the use of Hindi in Official work, as contemplated in the Official Language Act 1963 passed by the Parliament.

In this connection, an Officer of Official Language Department, Regional Office, Ministry of Home Affairs, Bombay had visited the Institute on 8.3.1988 and verified the use of Hindi in various Sections. In pursuance of the implementation of Official Language Policy, the Official Language Department, has informed that the Institute should take action on the following :-

- a) Subjects on all the Registers, Ledgers and files etc. should be written bilingually i.e. in Hindi and English
- b) All rubber stamps/seals have to be used bilingually in proper way.
- c) All kinds of Printing Materials, Stationery and forms etc. may be printed bilingually.

It is, therefore, requested that all Heads/Incharges of the Departments/Centres/Sections may kindly take necessary action in respect of the items pertaining to them.

It is further requested that all the rubber stamps/seals used in the Departments/Centres/Sections have got to be prepared bilingually. The concerned Departments/Centres/Sections which have not prepared all their rubber stamps/seals bilingually i.e. in Hindi and English so far, are requested to send a list of such stamps to the Assistant Registrar (Genl. Admn.) immediately so that the same could be got prepared bilingually and sent to them for regular use.

As the Institute has to submit compliance of the various instructions to the Ministry, you are requested to kindly pay personal attention to this.

REGISTRAR

Director.



Bibliography

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1. Visible Language, Volume XXI,  
Number 1 Winter 1987



