

A Linguistic and Cultural Overview of Endangered Tribal Languages of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana

Dr. Mada Srilatha

Assistant Professor

Department of Linguistics, Central University of Karnataka

Kalabuaragi, Karnataka

srilathams@cuk.ac.in

Abstract:

This paper examines the critical state of tribal languages in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, India, which are facing endangerment due to socio-economic pressures, language shift, and lack of institutional support. We provide detailed profiles of languages such as Gadaba, Konda-Dora, Kolami, Kupia, Gondi, Yerukala, Kui, Kuvi, Andhi, Lambadi, Savara, Koya, and Reli, highlighting their linguistic features, cultural significance, and the challenges they encounter. Drawing on data from the 2011 census and insights from linguistic scholars, we discuss the factors contributing to language death and the ongoing efforts to document and revitalize these languages. The paper underscores the importance of preserving these languages to maintain the cultural heritage and identity of India's tribal communities.

Key terms: Endangered languages, Tribal languages, Linguistic diversity, language death, language preservation

Introduction

Languages act as repositories of local and traditional knowledge. The value of a language is not determined by the number of letters in an alphabet, the number of words it includes, or the accuracy of its grammar. It is highly valued for conveying a distinct way of thinking connected to the culture. There are several ways in which history and culture are reflected. Three standard methods are used to differentiate between different cultures: dress, food, and architecture. Yet, one of the best resources for learning about a country's or region's history and culture is its language. Unfortunately, many cultures are in danger, and the list of endangered languages is constantly growing. According to the UNESCO Interactive Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger (<http://www.unesco.org/languages-atlas/>), India is the most threatened country (197 languages), followed by the USA (191), China (144), and Indonesia (143). Among the 197 endangered languages in India, 81 are "vulnerable," followed by "definitely endangered" (63), "severely endangered" (6), "critically endangered" (42), and "already extinct" (5). The cause of concern is that 96% of the Indian languages are threatened by extinction (The Wire, 08/06/2017).

No doubt Hindi is India's first and the world's fourth most spoken language (652 million plus) with 438 million plus L1 speakers and 214 million L2 speakers; Bengali occupies India's second and world's tenth most spoken language position with L1 and L2 speakers of 245 million (including 19 million in Bangladesh). Telugu occupies India's third and world's 17th most-spoken language position with 92 million speakers ("Summary by language size," Ethnologue. Retrieved on 14-11-2017). Despite some Indian languages being on the list of the major languages spoken in the world, the fact remains that India owns the most significant number of endangered languages. Officially, there are 122 languages in India. Still, the Peoples Linguistic Survey of India has identified 780 languages, of which 50 have gone extinct in the past five decades. The terrible situation of our languages, particularly the tribal ones, does not reflect well for India, the world's largest democracy obligated by the constitution (see, for example, Articles 29 and 244) to protect linguistic and ethnic variety. In terms of language vitality, India has a dubious status: while the majority of minor languages are heading towards extinction, some languages (major state languages) are flourishing in terms of user growth, linguistic use (vocabulary, phonology, morphology, and commercials), literature enrichment (including translation), web presence, and interaction.

Survey on languages in India

According to one estimate, six percent of the languages spoken now are spoken by ninety-five percent of the world's population. According to a two-year assessment by the Bhasha Research and Publication Centre in Vadodara, "the country had 1,100 languages in 1961, but nearly 220 of them have disappeared." Sociolinguist, author, and survey lead coordinator Ganesh Devy claims that most lost languages belonged to scattered, nomadic people across the country. If they were still living, three to four percent of people—roughly 50 million—would have spoken about them," Devy told the media. In 1971, the Indian government decided to omit languages with less than 10,000 speakers from its list. In India, barely 3.4 percent of people speak the remaining 1,613 mother tongues, while 96.56 percent speak the 22 languages specified in the Indian Constitution. This implies that any languages that are not listed in the census ought to be regarded as endangered. It would be a sad state of affairs if these languages were not kept alive.

Why is there a language death?

The founder director of the Bhasha Research and Publication Centre and literary scholar Ganesh N. Devy worries about what will happen to India's tribal languages in the future. He points out that historically, state-sponsored languages like Sanskrit and Tamil have given these minority languages more prominence than they have traditionally, followed by foreign languages like Arabic, Persian, and English, and currently by the official languages of the states. Many languages are still classified as oral because so few have ever been exposed to printing technology. The survival of these languages is even more tenuous in the age of digital technology. We would be accountable if they went extinct without being incorporated into digital culture. The majority of endangered languages are tribal in Andhra and Telangana. Tribal communities acquire major languages due to the declining use of these languages in various

fields as society changes, deterring the next generation from studying their mother tongue. Languages carry social identity, much like DNA. The disappearance of a language represents the loss of a vibrant identity and culture, both essential in our ever-evolving world. Telugu has benefited greatly from the cultural contributions of tribal communities, as seen by the many Telugu literary works that incorporate elements of several tribal languages.

These languages have also been crucial to the growth of regional art and culture. Languages act as repositories of literature, culture, and knowledge. For example, the Kupia-speaking Valmiki tribe has extensive knowledge of plants, animals, and woods. The Chenchu tribe, on the other hand, has a robust oral tradition and herbal remedy knowledge. Devy said that if these languages were lost, this wisdom would be lost forever. In the 1940s, anthropologist Christoph von Fürer-Haimendorf sought to preserve the Gondi language by promoting Gondi culture through the development of educational primers, fostering cultural and linguistic continuity among the Gondi people. More recently, the Tribal Welfare Department of the Telangana State Government has undertaken initiatives to conserve tribal languages by creating primers in major tribal languages spoken in the region, including Gondi, to support their revitalization and ensure their transmission to future generations.

We wish to highlight the local tribal languages of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana that are in danger of extinction in this environment. Native tribal languages, including Gadaba, Konda, Kolami, Kupia/ Valmiki, Gondi, Kuvi, Kui, Yerukala, Andhi, Savara, Lambadi/banjara, Koya, and Reli, have all made significant contributions to the enrichment of Telugu language and culture. These, which have enhanced the Telugu people's language and culture, are currently in danger of going extinct because of things like poor speakers' poverty, a lack of practice, and a lack of education.

List of endangered languages in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh:

1. **Gadaba or Gutob:** The Gadaba language, a Dravidian language spoken by the Gadaba people, is primarily found in Odisha and Andhra Pradesh (Visakhapatnam district). Classified under the South-Central branch of the Dravidian languages, Gadaba includes several dialects, such as Ollari and Gutob, with the latter sometimes considered a separate language due to significant differences. Vowel harmony and other typical Dravidian phonological and grammatical elements are present in the language. The language is endangered because there are fewer proficient speakers, despite the Gadaba community's great cultural value, which includes songs, ceremonies, and folklore. Younger generations are increasingly shifting to dominant regional languages like Odia and Telugu, threatening the transmission of Gadaba's oral traditions. Around 122,770 (2011 Census) people are using this language. The native speakers of Andhra Pradesh are moving to Telugu, an endangered language, as a result of widespread migration to urban areas. Documentation projects, the development of educational resources, and the encouragement of its usage in nearby schools and communities are all part of the language's preservation and revitalisation efforts. The significance of preserving cultural diversity and

legacy is shown by the efforts of linguists and cultural organisations to document oral traditions and common language usage in order to stop its extinction.

2. Konda-Dora or Porja: The Konda-Dora or Porja language is a Dravidian language spoken by the Konda-Dora tribal community primarily in the hilly regions of the Indian states of Odisha (Koraput district) and Andhra Pradesh (Vizianagaram, Srikakulam, and East Godavari districts). It belongs to the South-Central branch of the Dravidian language family, sharing linguistic affinities with other regional languages. This language has a population of 20000 people (2011 census). The script for this language is Telugu and Odia. It is distinguished by unique grammatical and phonological traits common to Dravidian languages, such as a rich inventory of vowels and consonants and agglutinative morphology. As a means of passing down oral literature, traditional knowledge, and indigenous customs from one generation to the next, the language is essential to the Konda-Dora people's cultural identity. However, like many tribal languages in India, Konda-Dora is facing endangerment due to socio-economic factors, linguistic assimilation, and a lack of institutional support for its preservation and promotion. In order to preserve its legacy and guarantee its survival in the face of contemporary pressures and shifting demographics, linguists, anthropologists, and local communities are working to document, revitalise, and promote the use of Konda-Dora through educational initiatives, language revitalisation programs, and community-driven efforts.

3. Kolami: The Kolami language belongs to the Dravidian language family and is primarily spoken by the Kolam or Kolami people in the central Indian states of Maharashtra, Telangana, and parts of Chhattisgarh and Odisha. It is classified under the South-Central branch of the Dravidian languages, sharing linguistic ties with other languages spoken in the region. The population is 44,805(2011 census). The script of this language is Devanagari. Kolami exhibits typical Dravidian phonological characteristics and grammatical features, including agglutinative morphology and a rich inventory of consonants and vowels. As a means of passing down oral tradition, customs, folklore, and traditional knowledge from one generation to the next, the language is integral to the Kolami community's cultural and social identity. However, like many indigenous languages, Kolami is endangered due to language shift towards dominant regional languages, socio-economic changes, and limited institutional support for language preservation and revitalization efforts. Efforts are being made by linguists, anthropologists, and community organizations to document Kolami, develop educational materials, and promote its use in local schools and communities. These initiatives aim to safeguard Kolami's linguistic heritage and ensure its continued vitality in the face of modern challenges.

4. Kupia or Valmiki: Kupia is an Indo- Aryan language spoken by the tribal community of the Valmiki people, predominantly found in the Indian states of Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, particularly in the districts of Hyderabad, Mahabubnagar, Srikakulam, Vizianagaram, East Godavari districts and Visakhapatnam. The population of this language is 79,000 (2007), and 6,600 native speakers (2007). This language is a part of the Central Dravidian subgroup and has many speakers. However, it is considered a vulnerable language due to the increasing influence

of dominant regional languages like Telugu. Kupia is primarily an oral language with limited written literature and documentation, which poses challenges for its preservation and promotion. Traditional dance, music, and rituals that are inextricably linked to their language are all part of the rich cultural history of the Koya people who speak Kupia. By gathering dictionaries, documenting oral histories, and encouraging its use in educational settings, linguistic scholars and local communities are working to preserve and revitalise Kupia. The preservation of Kupia is crucial for maintaining the cultural identity and heritage of the Koya people, as language is a fundamental aspect of their societal and artistic expression.

Though Kupia is the medium of conversation amongst the other, the Valmiki tribe tends to switch to Telugu. Mostly landless laborers, they are economically handicapped. Due to frequent migration in search of a living, their access to education is limited. Thus, the preservation of language through writing does not take place.

5. **Gondi:** Gondi is a South-Central Dravidian language spoken by the Gondi people, one of the largest tribal groups in India. Predominantly found in Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Odisha, Gondi has a speaker population of approximately 2.9 million (2011 census). However, many Gonds have shifted to using regional languages such as Hindi, Marathi, or Telugu in daily communication. The script of the Gondi language is Devanagari. The language has several dialects and remains unwritten primarily, with a rich oral tradition encompassing folk tales, songs, and cultural narratives passed down through generations. Efforts to preserve Gondi include the creation of a Gondi script by local scholars, the introduction of Gondi in primary education in some regions, and various linguistic documentation projects. These initiatives aim to revitalize the language and ensure its transmission to future generations. The preservation of Gondi is vital for maintaining the cultural heritage and identity of the Gondi people, as their language is deeply intertwined with their traditions, social practices, and collective memory.

6. **Yerukula:** Erukala, also known as Erukula or Yerukula, is a Dravidian language spoken by the Erukala community, a traditionally nomadic tribal group primarily found in the Indian states of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka, mainly in the districts of north Nizamabad and Karimagar in Telangana, Nilgiri, Coimbatore, Periyar, Salem and Chengai Anna in Tamil Nadu, parts of Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra. The population of this language is 519,337 Yerukala (2011 census) and native speakers 58,065 (2011 census). The Erukala people are known for their distinct cultural practices and have traditionally been involved in occupations such as fortune-telling, basket weaving, and trading. Because its speakers frequently switch to more widely used regional languages like Telugu and Tamil for socioeconomic and communication purposes, Erukala is regarded as a vulnerable language. Its preservation is severely hampered by the fact that it is mostly an oral language with little formal documentation or written literature. Linguistic documentation initiatives, the creation of educational resources in the language, and community promotion of its usage are all part of the efforts to revitalise Erukala. Since the Erukala people's language reflects their traditional knowledge, customs, and

social structures, its preservation is essential to preserving their distinctive cultural identity and legacy. Linguistic scholars and community leaders continue to work towards increasing the visibility and usage of Erukala to ensure it is passed on to the next generations.

7. **Kui:** Kui is a South-Central Dravidian language spoken by the Kandha, or Kondh, people primarily in the Indian state of Odisha, with smaller populations in Andhra Pradesh. The districts are adjacent to Khammam and Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh, Kandhamal, Ganjam, and Koraput in Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu. The population is 9,41,488 (2011 census). The script of this language is Odia. It is recognized as one of India's scheduled languages and has a significant number of speakers, estimated to be around a million. Kui is mainly used in rural areas and is the medium of everyday communication among the Kandha people, who have a rich cultural heritage that includes traditional practices, rituals, and folklore closely tied to their language. The language has its script, the Kui script, but it is often written in the Odia script for practical purposes. Despite its relatively large number of speakers, Kui faces challenges due to the influence of dominant regional languages like Odia and Telugu, which are often preferred in formal education and administration. Efforts to preserve and promote Kui include the creation of educational programs, the development of literature in the language, and initiatives to document and revitalize traditional oral narratives and songs. These efforts are crucial for maintaining the linguistic and cultural identity of the Kandha people, ensuring that their language and heritage are preserved for future generations.

8. **Kuvi:** Kuvi is a South-Central Dravidian language spoken by the Khond or Kondh people, primarily residing in the Indian states of Odisha and Andhra Pradesh. The districts are Vishakhapatnam, Vizianagaram, and Srikakulam in Andhra Pradesh, as well as Koraput, Kalahandi, Ganjam, and Phulbani in Odisha. The population is 1,55,000 (2011 census). The language has a significant speaker base, with estimates suggesting around half a million speakers. Kuvi is used extensively in daily communication among the Khond community, which is known for its rich cultural traditions, including vibrant festivals, music, dance, and unique rituals. Although the language is mainly oral, there has been a growing effort to document and standardize it, often using the Odia script for written purposes. Kuvi faces challenges from dominant regional languages such as Odia and Telugu, which are increasingly used in education, administration, and broader social interactions. Preservation initiatives for Kuvi include the development of educational resources, the promotion of literacy in the language, and the recording of traditional oral literature and folklore. These efforts are crucial for maintaining the cultural heritage and identity of the Khond people, as language plays a vital role in preserving their traditional knowledge, social practices, and collective memory. The ongoing work by linguists, educators, and community leaders aims to ensure that Kuvi remains a living and thriving language for future generations.

9. **Andhi:** Andhi, also known as Andh, is an Indo-Aryan language spoken by the Andh community, primarily found in the Indian states of Maharashtra and Telangana. The districts are Adilabad and Hyderabad in Telangana, Akola, Aurangabad, Buldana, Nanded, Parbhani, and

Yevatmal in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh. The Andh people, a Scheduled Tribe, have a rich cultural heritage closely tied to their language, which is used in daily communication and traditional practices. Since many of its speakers are progressively switching to more widely used regional languages like Telugu and Marathi for socioeconomic growth and wider contact, Andhi is seen as a vulnerable language despite its historical value. The language has a significant oral heritage that includes songs, folklore, and collective stories that have been passed down through the years, but it has very little written literature. Language documentation, the development of instructional resources, and campaigns to encourage its usage within the community are all part of Andhi preservation efforts. These initiatives are crucial to preserving the Andh people's cultural identity and legacy, as well as their language and customs for next generations. The ongoing work by linguists, community leaders, and cultural organizations aims to revitalize Andhi, encouraging its use in both private and public spheres to keep the language vibrant and relevant in a rapidly changing world.

10. Lambadi or Banjara or Gormati: Lambadi, also known as Banjara, is an Indo-Aryan language spoken by the Banjara community, which is spread across various Indian states, including Rajasthan, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Maharashtra, and Madhya Pradesh. The districts are Warangal, Rayalaseema, Guntur, Adilabad, Bidar, and Mahabubnagar in Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Odisha, West Bengal, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh. The population is 48,57,819 (2011 census). The Banjara, traditionally a nomadic group known for their vibrant culture, distinctive attire, and intricate embroidery, have a rich oral tradition that includes folk songs, tales, and proverbs. Lambadi is primarily an oral language with limited written literature. However, there have been efforts to develop a script for it, and it is sometimes written in Devanagari, Telugu, or Kannada scripts, depending on the region. The language encounters difficulties due to the impact of prevailing regional languages, resulting in a trend among younger people towards these languages for educational and socio-economic advantages. Effort to preserve Lambadi encompasses linguistic documentation, the development of educational materials, and cultural initiatives that encourage the use of the language in both community and academic environment. These efforts are crucial for safeguarding the linguistic and cultural legacy of the Banjara people, as their language is an essential element of their identity and traditional wisdom. The continuous endeavors by linguists, cultural advocates, and community leaders strive to guarantee that Lambadi persists as a living and dynamic language, nurturing a sense of pride and continuity among its speakers.

Unlike other languages, Lambadi is experiencing resurgence with broad educational efforts. Currently, they are striving to protect their language. There exist journals and books published in the language.

11. **Savara:** The Savara, also known as Saora, Sora, or Saura, are an indigenous tribe of eastern India primarily distributed in the states of Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, and Bihar, with a population of about 3,10, 00 (2011 census), most of whom reside in Odisha. Many Savara have become Hinduized and generally speak the Oriya language, though their traditional Munda

dialect is still preserved among those living in the hills. The hill-dwelling Savara are divided into subtribes based on occupation: the Jati Savara are cultivators, the Arsi are weavers, the Muli are ironworkers, the Kindal are basket makers, and the Kumbi are potters. The traditional social unit of the Savara is the extended family, which includes both males and females descended from a common male ancestor. Savara, part of the Austroasiatic language family, is one of the oldest languages in India, with a history linked to the ancient epics Mahabharata and Ramayana. Savara has maintained its distinctiveness over the centuries despite influences from neighboring languages. It belongs to the Munda branch of the Austroasiatic family, which is related to other tribal languages like Santali and Mundari. The Savara population is estimated to be around 300,000 to 400,000 people, primarily residing in the hill and forest regions of Odisha and Andhra Pradesh, with smaller populations in Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand. The language is considered vulnerable as many Savaras are bilingual, speaking regional languages such as Odia, Telugu, or Hindi. Savara, which includes their oral traditions, folklore, ceremonies, and traditional knowledge, is an essential component of the tribe's cultural identity. Linguists, cultural groups, and government agencies are working on projects to record Savara, create dictionaries, and create instructional resources as part of the language's documentation and preservation efforts. In order to guarantee that the next generation learns and speaks Savara, initiatives also encourage its use in community and educational contexts. For the tribe to preserve its cultural legacy and pass on its distinct viewpoint to future generations, these initiatives are crucial. Despite modernization and language shift challenges, ongoing efforts to revitalize Savara are crucial for preserving the rich heritage of the Savara people.

12. **Koya:** Koya is a Dravidian language spoken by the Koya tribal community in India, predominantly in Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, and Chhattisgarh. The Koya people are known for their rich cultural traditions and strong connection to their ancestral lands. The history of the Koya language is deeply linked to the history of the Koya people, one of India's many indigenous tribes with a history spanning several centuries. Traditionally, the Koyas have been forest dwellers and subsistence farmers in central and southern India's hilly and forested regions. Their language has evolved, reflecting their way of life, environment, and cultural practices. Linguistically, Koya is part of the South-Central branch of the Dravidian language family, including languages such as Telugu, Gondi, and Kolami. It shares several linguistic features with these related languages but has unique aspects, with various dialects that can differ significantly between regions. The Koya-speaking population is estimated to be around 15,00,000 (2011 census), primarily residing in rural and tribal areas. However, Koya faces challenges from dominant regional languages such as Telugu and Odia, leading many Koya speakers to be bilingual, using their native language at home and the regional language for education and official purposes. Koya is a vital part of the cultural identity of the Koya people, encompassing their oral traditions, folklore, songs, and rituals.

Their traditional way of life, which includes hunting, farming, and the environment, is well-represented in the language's lexicon. To preserve the Koya community's identity and cultural legacy, Koya must be preserved. Linguists and researchers are constantly working to record and

preserve the Koya language by creating dictionaries and grammatical explanations of the language. Cultural organizations and NGOs are also promoting the use of Koya, particularly among the younger generation, by creating educational materials and Koya-language media. In recent years, there has been an increased focus on using digital technology to support language preservation, including developing Koya-language content for mobile apps and websites and using social media to connect Koya speakers and promote the language. The Koya tribal community in India speaks Koya, a significant Dravidian language that reflects their traditional way of life and close ties to the natural world. Continued documentation and revitalisation activities are essential for maintaining Koya and guaranteeing that future generations will continue to speak and value their native language in spite of obstacles from modernisation and language shift.

13. **Reli:** Reli, also known as Relli or Relli Chenchu, is a Dravidian language spoken by the Relli community, a tribal group primarily residing in the southern Indian states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. The history of the Reli language is closely intertwined with that of the Relli people, who are indigenous to South India. Traditionally, the Relli have been forest dwellers and subsistence farmers, and their language has developed unique characteristics that reflect their lifestyle, environment, and cultural practices. Linguistically, Reli belongs to the Dravidian language family, specifically the South-Central Dravidian subgroup, which includes major languages like Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, and Malayalam. Despite the influence of neighboring dominant languages such as Telugu, Reli retains its distinct phonological, morphological, and syntactic features. The Relli-speaking population is relatively small, estimated to be around 13,000 (2011 census) speakers, primarily living in rural and forested areas of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. Due to the strong influence of Telugu, many Relli speakers are bilingual, using Telugu for broader communication, while Reli is used within their community. Reli is considered an endangered language, facing decline due to the dominance of regional languages and the lack of formal education in Reli, especially among younger generations more inclined to adopt Telugu. The Relli people's language, which includes their oral traditions, folklore, songs, and rituals, is an essential part of their cultural identity. It is also full of words that are associated with their traditional way of life, which includes hunting, farming, and the environment. For the Relli community to preserve its identity and cultural legacy, Reli must be preserved. Efforts to document and preserve Reli are limited but ongoing, with some linguists and researchers working to compile dictionaries and grammatical descriptions. Cultural organizations and governmental bodies are involved in promoting Reli, particularly among the younger generation, through educational materials and cultural programs. Recent initiatives have also explored using digital media and technology to create content in Reli, aiming to make the language more accessible and appealing to younger speakers. Ongoing documentation and revitalisation initiatives are essential for maintaining Reli and guaranteeing that future generations continue to speak and cherish their original language, even in the face of modernisation and language shift issues.

Preservation Efforts and Challenges

Language in India www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940** Vol. 25:5 May 2025

Dr. Mada Srilatha

A Linguistic and Cultural Overview of Endangered Tribal Languages of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana

Efforts to preserve endangered tribal languages in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana include linguistic documentation, educational initiatives, and digital technology. Documentation projects aim to record and analyze these languages, creating dictionaries and grammatical descriptions, as seen in efforts for languages like Gadaba, Konda-Dora, and Gondi. Educational efforts focus on developing teaching materials and incorporating tribal languages into local curricula, such as the introduction of Gondi in primary education and the promotion of Kui and Kuvi in educational programs. Digital initiatives, such as language-learning apps and social media content for Koya and Reli, make these languages more accessible to younger generations.

However, these efforts face significant challenges. Limited funding and institutional support hinder comprehensive preservation programs. The dominance of regional languages like Telugu and Odia in education and administration creates a linguistic hierarchy that discourages tribal language use. Socio-economic factors, including poverty and migration, further disrupt language transmission, as exemplified by the Valmiki tribe's limited access to education due to frequent migration and economic disadvantage.

Despite these obstacles, initiatives by organizations like the Central Institute of Indian Languages and the University Grants Commission, as well as community-driven projects, are crucial for the survival of these languages.

Conclusion

The endangered tribal languages of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana are vital to the cultural identity and traditional knowledge of their communities. Their decline, driven by socio-economic pressures and the dominance of major languages, represents a significant loss for India's linguistic diversity. While government and community efforts have made progress in documenting and revitalizing these languages, continued support and innovative approaches are essential. Preserving these languages ensures that the cultural heritage of India's tribal communities endures for future generations.

References

D Rajendra Kumar (2020). Revitalizing Endangered Languages in India: Can Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Work? Social Sciences in the 21st Century, Oxford, London.

MHRD. (2014). Protection and preservation of endangered languages of India, press information Bureau Government of India. New Delhi: Bureau Government of India. Ministry of Human Resource Development.

Sankar, S. V. G., & Aruna, Y. (2020). The endangered languages of Telugu speaking states: Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. EasyChair Preprint.

https://easychair.org/publications/preprint/January_4_2020

<https://telanganatoday.com/column-various-languages-spoken-by-tribal-people-of-telangana>

Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-2940 Vol. 25:5 May 2025

Dr. Mada Srilatha

A Linguistic and Cultural Overview of Endangered Tribal Languages of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana

Other sources- Articles -Times of India