

Language Loss and Revitalization of Gond language: An Endangered Language of Central India

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Abstract

The present paper illustrates the various causes of language loss of Gond tribes of central India, the second largest tribal group of India and the status of revitalization process of the community to revive the language. A linguistic analysis on the data collected are presented to demonstrate the current linguistic situation of the tribe and to ascertain the current language in use. The linguistic analyses are wholly based on author's observation and the study conducted on the language spoken by the tribe. The data are collected from Gond speakers who inhabit border areas of Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, two states of central India, where Gonds are found in large number. Gond is the native language of Gond tribe, mainly spoken in the Indian states of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, and in various adjoining areas of neighboring states. Gond originally belongs to Dravidian language family and it has been distinguished as a vulnerable language in UNESCO, 2009 report, which explains that the language is spoken by most children, but it may be restricted to certain domains. Gond language, which is widely spoken in Madhya Pradesh by Gond tribes is found to reflect many linguistic similarities with other dominant languages like Hindi or Chhattisgarhi. The paper also summarizes the attitude of the speakers towards their lost language. It briefly explains the recent revitalization initiation by the community to minimize the communication gap among the Gonds of different states and presents the different factors causing hurdles in revitalization process.

Keywords: Gond, Gond, Indigenous, Endangered, Preservation, Revitalization

1. Introduction

India is a home to diverse religious, linguistic, and cultural groups and thus become a multi-religious, multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, and multi-lingual country in the world. Indian subcontinent consists of a number of separate linguistic communities which enjoy language and

culture in common and sometimes deliver a huge difference in dialects. In a multilingual country like India making choice over other languages in any domain may cause a lot of turbulence socially, economically, and politically. Indian tribal languages are priceless relics of India.

Indian tribal language can be defined as `folk` languages, possessing no literary specifications of their own and spoken by people of ethnic groups who prefer to live in relatively isolated groups. The Constitution of India has made specific provisions to safeguard the cultural and linguistic rights of the tribes and the minorities. Article 29 of the Constitution of India guarantees any section of the citizens having a distinct language, script, or culture of its own has the right to conserve the same. Notwithstanding these constitutional guarantees of linguistic and cultural rights, many tribal languages and indigenous cultures are in the path of extinction. Due to lack of education and ignorance about constitutional right, many indigenous tribes have lost their languages and their precious cultures.

¹A study conducted by UNESCO (2009) reveals that India has the largest number of endangered languages in the world -- 191 Indian languages are endangered and five as already extinct. Studies reveal that many indigenous languages are dying out worldwide due to the lack of native speakers of that language. UNESCO, in its report categorized endangered languages into five different levels of vitality: unsafe, definitely endangered, severely endangered, critically endangered, and extinct. In India, out of 1006 languages, 196 language are endangered or on the way to extinction. Out of 196, 84 languages are unsafe, 62 definitely endangered, 6 severely endangered, 35 critically endangered and 9 extinct. ²The People's Linguistic Survey of India (PLSI) did a comprehensive linguistic survey of the country in the year 2013 and it said that currently 780 different languages are spoken, and 86 different scripts are used in the country. It reports that India has lost nearly 250 languages in the last 50 years or so. 4,000 of the worlds 6,000 languages face a potential threat of extinction, out of which 10 per cent is spoken in India. (Devy, 2013).

Many indigenous languages and dialects became extinct as their speakers stop using the native language over many years. When a language dies out, future generations lose a crucial part of the culture that shapes their beings because disappearance of a language does not simply mean fading out a language forever. With language, it carries away the vast knowledge about history, culture, tradition as well as the natural environment. UNESCO in its report (2009)

¹UNESCO Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger. www.unesco.org/languages-atlas. accessed in April 2018

²Devy, G. N. (2013) stated in an interview published in a daily newspaper *Hindustan times* www.hindustantimes.com, accessed in February 2018.

distinguishes Gondi language, spoken in Madhya Pradesh as a vulnerable language, which explains that the language is spoken by most children, but it may be restricted to certain domains.

The present paper explores the level of endangerment of Gondi language of Gonds tribes of central India especially in Madhya Pradesh where Gonds are largely populated. The present paper includes a brief linguistic analysis of the current language spoken by the tribes in the state of Madhya Pradesh, India especially Gonds of Anuppur district, where Gonds are largely populated. The study also aims at determining of various causes of language endangerment of Gonds tribes and the community effort to revitalize the language.

2. Gonds and Gondi Language

The Indian languages belong to five language families: Indo-Aryan, Dravidian, Austro-Asiatic, Tibeto-Burman and Andamanese. Tribal people of India are however classified under all speech families except Indo-Aryan. The Gonds are the second largest tribal group of central India and inhabit chiefly in the states of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, and in various adjoining areas of neighboring states. The majority speak various and mutually unintelligible dialects of Gondi. The word *Gond* originated from Gondwana, which corresponds to the greater part of what is now the central provinces. The occurrence of the word “Gond” is found in the works of Sanskrit lexicographers, denoting the low tribe.

Earlier studies have revealed that Gonds moved within the vast region of central India and there is a possibility of a migratory movement of Gond aborigines from extreme of south of India towards the Godavari river and across its bank towards Bastar and later towards the Satpura mountain. In Madhya Pradesh, Gond tribes have been living for generations in the midst of the Aryan people speaking Indo-Aryan languages like Hindi, Halbi and other varieties of Hindi.

Gondi is the native language of Gond tribe. Gondi originally belongs to Dravidian language family mainly spoken in the Indian states of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Odisha. But with times and due to constant influence of dominant languages, Gonds of some states had lost their language and started to speak various languages depending on which ever language is dominant in the area. Thus, Gondi has no well defined linguistic boundaries, the speakers being almost everywhere scattered among people employing various other languages. Gondi spoken by Gonds of Madhya Pradesh is different from Gondi spoken in Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, or Maharashtra etc. Gonds of different states started to speak distinct languages where hardly any similarity can be found. In the north it meets with Eastern and Western Hindi and Rajasthani, to the west, Marathi, to the south Telugu, and to the east Telugu, Oriya, Halbi and Chattisgarhi. Gondi has come under the

influence of Telugu, especially in the south, where the so called Koi dialect may be considered as a link between the two forms of speech. Much stronger is however the influence exercised by the neighbouring Arayan dialects.³

It was believed that Gondi is a very ancient language. Robert Caldwell and Henry Heras have stated that Gondi is the ancient version of the Tamil language. Scholars like Russell, Hiralal and Stephen Fuch viewed that Gondi was a part of the family of Dravidian languages According to A. J. Rajurkar, a history researcher from Chandrapur, Maharashtra, Gondi is a forest language and because of its geographical proximity to Marathi, Hindi, Telugu and Kannada, words from these languages have found their way into Gondi (Rajurkar, 1982). But Gondi has its own unique nature and is much more than the influences of Marathi, Hindi, Telugu, Kannada, and Sanskrit. Motiram Kangali, a scholar of Gondi literature, has said that Gondi was the official language of an ancient kingdom called Gondvana and it had its own script, grammar, figures of speech, etymology, and literature.

The present paper focuses on Gondi language spoken by Gond tribes of Madhya Pradesh, a state of India, where Gonds are populated largely. Gondi of Madhya Pradesh is found to reflect many linguistic similarities with other Indo-Aryan languages like Hindi or Chhattisgarhi. In Madhya Pradesh, Gonds inhabit the dense forests of the Vindhyas, Satpura and Mandla in the Narmada region of the Amarkantak range for centuries. Gonds have been found living for generations in the midst of the Aryan people speaking Indo-Aryan languages, and thus have been in constant contact with Indo Aryan languages for many years.

The prevalent form of Gondi language shows extensive influence of Hindi and Chhattisgarhi in all linguistic levels. Gondi language of Madhya Pradesh is in constant contact with dominant languages like Hindi and varieties of Hindi for many years. ⁴When languages are in contact with each other for a very long period of time they tend to assimilate several features of languages in contact at all levels of grammar and thus deviate considerably from the characteristic features of their own genetic stock (Abbi, 2001). The regional language is thriving to replace the Indigenous languages rapidly. Recent studies revealed that the current form of speech is completely deviant from its ancestral language.

³ www.peopleslinguisticsurvey.org.accessed in December 2018

⁴Abbi, A. (2001). A Manual of Linguistic Field Work and Structure of Indian Languages. Munich: Lincoln Europa. 1

3. Causes of Language Loss Among Gonds of Madhya Pradesh

Although there are various causes of language loss in a community, the major cause of language loss of the Gonds is due to constant influence of dominant languages like Hindi and Chhattisgarhi. A study has revealed that the current language use by the Gonds is neither pure Hindi or nor pure Chhattisgarhi. Due to constant contact with dominant languages, a new variety has emerged which is called as ‘Dehati language’ which means local language by the tribe. It is a hybrid variety or mixture of Hindi and Chhattisgarhi languages, two neighboring and dominant languages of the community.

⁵Linguistically, the forces of language loyalty and language revivalism as well as the need to communicate inter-tribally have given rise to two types of languages, one – the converged, the hybrid varieties, resulting from two or more languages mixtures a variety of Hindi, which is from standard variety. (Abbi, 2001). On the other hand, language shift, which is a sociolinguistic term, takes place in multilingual situation. Weinreich (1953) defines shift as “the change from the habitual use of one language to that of another” and argues that it is very essential to observe the sociological aspects of the process as an integral part of the contact linguistics. Language shift in most of the cases is observed from the minority towards the majority language. But Appel and Muysken (1987) defines shift as a neutral concept which may even be towards a minority language as well. Language shift creates and usually causes a lot of impact and effect on linguistic, cultural, social identities of the native speakers. It is a common and global phenomenon.

Language may always disappear because of economic, cultural, political, religious, and other reasons. Especially in the region of mixed population, many tribal groups have lost their mother tongues and simply speak local or regional languages. Gondi language is no exception of that. Gonds have been found living for generation in the midst of the Aryan people speaking Indo-Aryan languages and thus have been in constant contact with Indo-Aryan languages. Due to constant contact with the languages of different language families, the Gondi speakers gradually shift to the dominant language of the region and thus, it leads to the deviation of the language completely from the characteristic features of their own genetic stock. Language contact situation is a situation of prolonged association between the speakers of different languages. Weinreich (1953) states that "language contact can result in such far reaching changes that the affected language assumes a different structural type".⁶ When languages are in contact with each other for a very long period of time they tend to assimilate several features of languages in

⁵Abbi, A. (2001). A Manual of Linguistic Field Work and Structure of Indian Languages. Munich: Lincoln Europa.

⁶Abbi, A. (2001). A Manual of Linguistic Field Work and Structure of Indian Languages. Munich: Lincoln Europa.

contact at all levels of grammar and thus deviate considerably from the characteristic features of their own genetic stock. Language contact not only leads to a convergence of language but also gives rise to many complex grammatical features (Abbi, 2001).

The recent studies also reveal that all forms of Gondi abound in Aryan words and Indo-Aryan language is gradually supplanting the old Dravidian language of the Gonds. As the Gonds have been living amidst the Indo-Aryan language speaking people, they gradually started to adopt the language of the majority group and this led to the emergence of a new variety, which is similar to Hindi or Chhattisgarhi.

One of the reasons for the tribal language loss in India is due to the adoption of the prestigious language for their better livelihood and security. Tribal people replace their language with their regional language by encouraging or tolerating bilingualism. The new generation eventually becomes monolingual to the new tongue and gradually the native language moves towards the course of extinction. Besides, weighing the current situation, tribal people prefer to learn or adopt the regional/official language that offers more job opportunity in the job market and better gain. Gonds of Madhya Pradesh, being a tribe of socially and economically backward group have been in regular contact with the Hindi speakers due to social, economic, and political purposes which is one of the significant reasons of language loss among Gonds. They have accepted the dominant language of the region, i.e. Hindi or a variety of Hindi as a major means of communication and try to learn that language. It was observed that due to influence of Hindi language, which is a state language of Madhya Pradesh, the young generation of Gonds is forgetting their hybrid variety and they will be monolingual speakers of Hindi in the coming years. As it was discussed earlier, due to the continuous influence of prestigious language and receiving formal education in that second language. The new generation gradually is forgetting their currently used variety. Gonds have lost their original language due to the influence of standard language/regional language and the shifting in language happened mainly due to aspiration for better livelihood, social and financial security.

4. Gondi of Madhya Pradesh: A Linguistic Analysis

Madhya Pradesh is inhabited by 43 scheduled tribes. The main tribal groups in Madhya Pradesh are Gond, Bhil, Baiga, Korku, Bhariya, Halba, Kaul, and Maria and they inhabit in Anuppur, Dindori, Dhar, Jhabua, Mandala etc., districts of Madhya Pradesh. These districts of Madhya Pradesh have more than 50% tribal population. A study was conducted on Gondi speakers of Madhya Pradesh. Although Gondi speakers are found in many districts of Madhya Pradesh, the present study was carried out in some areas of Anuppur district. Thus, the areas which had been selected for the present study were Amarkanatak and adjacent area of Amarkantak. An attempt has been made to investigate what extent the regional language is thriving to replace this indigenous language rapidly as well as to find out the prime causes of

language loss in Gonds. The data are collected from native speakers of Gondi language by administering a questionnaire. The study was carried out to observe how Gondi language is decaying gradually whereas the young generation of Gond tends to switch to Hindi leaving their native language at stake. The direct approach method was adopted for the present study. The required data were collected through administering questionnaires to the native speakers of Gondi. Data were collected from two age groups people.

Group 1: Young native group (age between 18 to 20 years)

Group 2: Old native group (age between 55 to 60 years)

The questionnaire consists of two parts. Part 1: personal details of the informants such as name, address, age, gender, educational background, medium of instruction, mother tongue, and any other languages known, etc. Part 2: List of Nouns as well as Verbs in English for which respondents were asked to provide Gondi words and a list of basic sentences.

The group 1 members are undergraduate students pursuing their bachelor's degree in Indira Gandhi National Tribal University of Madhya Pradesh. Indira Gandhi National Tribal University is located in the midst of the tribe-inhabited area of Madhya Pradesh especially Gonds and Baiga tribes with a major aim to provide access to higher education and research facilities primarily to facilitate the tribal population of India for their absolute development and progress. There are more than 50% students of this university who belong to Scheduled tribes and the majority of them belong to Gond tribes and its sub tribes like – Panika, Dhurvey, Bhariya, Markam, etc. The members of first group selected for the present study were the students of this university. They had their formal education in Hindi medium schools. The second group is elder group of the community who use Gondi at home and had little formal education. Data were collected from two different age groups of people with an aim to make a comparative study to investigate the language shifting in Gondi. The questionnaire includes basic words list in English, where subject's task was to provide the Gondi word for each given word in English. However, translation was made from English into Hindi wherever necessary to facilitate the respondents to retrieve their native words at ease. A careful analysis of the data reveals that the Chhattisgarhi words are predominating in the vocabulary of older generation of the Gonds and the usage of Chhattisgarhi words are more prevalent among them. Data analysis shows that there is complete adoption of Hindi as well as Chhattisgarhi languages in Gondi language. After analyzing the lexical items, it is found that words provided by the informants are similar to Hindi or Chhattisgarhi words. The lexicons of the older generation of the community are replaced by Chhattisgarhi lexicons. The Chhattisgarhi words are predominating in the language of the older group of people of the community. This may be due to the location of the selected areas under study. Interestingly, the young speakers of the community, who had formal education in Hindi medium schools, provided more Hindi words than Chhattisgarhi words.

Some examples of Gondi words provided by Informants

Words in Gondi	Gloss
/ʒanuar/	animal
/karən/	because
/k ^h un/	blood
/pustək/	book
/pɪnɑ/	drink
/kɑ:n/	ear
/nɑ:m/	name
/g ^h ɔr/	house
/nədi/	river
/sagər/	sea
/dek ^h nɑ/	see
/sonɑ/	sleep
/ʒɪb ^h /	tongue
/pɑ:nɪ/	water
/hɑ:m/	we
/kerɑ/	banana
/mɔʃrɪ/	fish
/ʃundɪ/	hair
/fɔr/	fruit
/behnɪ/	sister
/rukhwɑ/	tree
/dɑɪ/	mother
/ɑ:mɑ/	mango
/deɪkɪ/	wife
/dɔukɑ/	husband
/tɑrɑ/	lock
/ʃɪrɔɪ/	bird
/surəʒ/	sun
/berɑ/	time
/bərɦɪɑ/	good

The analysis result shows that the Vowel system of Gondi is similar to Hindi and the vowels can be distinguished on the scale of height and fronting rather than the vowel length. The analysis result shows that the prevalent form of Gondi language exhibits the similar sentence structural pattern of Indo-Aryan languages. Languages of Indo-Aryan family exhibit SOV (Subject-Object-Verb) word order. Thus, in a prototypical case, modifiers precede the modified,

and adjuncts precede verbs. Agreement is an important feature of Indo-Aryan language family, which can be perceived in the Gondi language as well. The following sentences show the SOV word order and subject verb agreement of Gondi language -

Examples:

(i)

- English - I eat mango.**
Gondi - mɛ: ɑ:mak^h:aũ
I -submango-obj eat-verb + 1st person agreement marker
Chhattisgarhi - mɛ: ɑ:mak^h:at^hɔ
I -submango-obj eat-verb + 1st person agreement marker
Hindi - mɛ: ɑ:m k^h:atahũ
I -submango-obj eat-verb gender marker - aux

(ii)

- English:** Nita is eating a mango
Gondi- nita ɑ:ma k^h:at^he
Nita-sub **mango**-obj eat-verb + 3rd person agreement marker
Chhattisgarhi- nita ɑ:ma k^h:av^he
Nita-sub **mango**-obj eat-verb + 3rd person agreement marker
Hindi – nita ɑ:m k^h: a rəhiḥe.
Nita-sub **mango**-obj eat-verb – prog -aux

(iii)

- English- I ate mango.**
Gondi -mɛ: ɑ:mak^h:ialeise.
I -submango-obj eat-verb + past tense marker
Chhattisgarhi .-mɛ: ɑ:ma k^h:ais
I -submango-obj eat-verb + past tense marker
Hindi - mɛ: ne ɑ:m k^h:aja
I -submango-obj eat-verb + past tense marker

From the examples above, it can be seen that Gondi language is inflecting in nature, which is a characteristic feature of Indo-Aryan languages. The agreement marker is found to be attached with the root verb like Chhattisgarhi language. It is also observed that progressive marker is absent in Chhattisgarhi and similarly in Gondi but Hindi uses /rəhi/ or /rəha/ to show the progression of an action. Besides, both the languages have suffixes, phonetically a little similar to past tense markers with the root verb.

Examples: **Gondi** –/ leise/ past tense marker to mean completed action

Chhattisgarhi – /ais/ past tense marker to mean completed action.

Nasalization of Vowel sounds is also found in Gondi language, which is another defining feature of Indo-Aryan languages and the presence of Aspirated sounds in the language strongly shows that Gondi, which is spoken by the Gonds under study, hardly preserves any Dravidian language features. It shows the characteristic features of Hindi and Chhattisgarhi.

Example: Nasalization of vowel sound-- ã ã etc.

Aspirated stops: p^h, t^h, b^h, k^h etc.

The analysis result shows that the language spoken by the Gonds under study has started to speak a variety which is a mixture of Hindi and Chhattisgarhi, a plausible result of perpetual influence of Hindi language, a regional and dominant language of Madhya Pradesh, and Chhattisgarhi, a neighboring language of the state.

During the interaction with the first respondent group, it was observed that they speak Gondi at home and Hindi with the peer groups and in other domains. The study reflects that the first group is the bilingual speaker of the community who uses Gondi as a restricted code, which is primarily a mixture of Hindi and Chhattisgarhi, and Hindi as an elaborate code. Thus, there exists a diglossic situation in the community.

As it has been discussed earlier, due to the continuous influence of prestigious language and receiving formal education in the second language, the new generation gradually is forgetting their native tongue. The influence of Hindi on Gondi is such that the community has already lost their language and the younger generation is slowly adopting Hindi language in place of the hybrid variety or converged variety. In fact, the hybrid variety which is a mixture of Hindi and Chhattisgarhi is on the verge of extinction. A careful analysis of the data reveals that the Chhattisgarhi words are predominating in the vocabulary of the older Gond people and the usage of Chhattisgarhi words are more in them. They use a variety of Chhattisgarhi at home as well as in other domains. Analysis result shows that the influence of Hindi is very much prevalent among the young educated speakers than the elder one. The influence of Chhattisgarhi is mostly found in the vocabulary used by older Gonds.

The young speakers who had formal education in Hindi medium schools provide 90% words in Hindi. In response to the query why their words were similar to Hindi words, they shared that they use the given words at home to mean the same. They use these words in their normal conversation and asserted that Gondi words are similar to Hindi words. Contrary to this, the old native speakers use words from Chhattisgarhi language. Although people do write their family name in order to safeguard their own caste or by writing their surname as Gond, they have lost their original language. Although Gondi language is genetically linked to the Dravidian

language family, the present study shows that current language use by the tribe hardly carries any linguistic features of ancestral language family.

4. Language Attitude Towards Gondi

A study was conducted on students belonging to Gond tribe to perceive their attitude towards the mother tongue, the language currently they use at home. The required data were collected through administering a questionnaire. The students selected for the study are the students of Humanities and Social Science faculties of Indira Gandhi National Tribal University, M.P. The students were asked to provide their opinion on statements to determine their attitude towards Gondi. These statements are -

1. I love to speak Gondi.
2. I want to learn Gondi and Hindi fluently.
3. I want Gondi as a medium of instruction in school as well as higher institution.
4. I want to preserve my native language which is Gondi.
5. I support the use of Gondi in education and in administration.

The analysis result shows that the majority of the respondents are positive towards Gondi language. The respondents stated that they love to speak Gondi and majority of them responded affirmatively regarding learning Gondi and Hindi languages fluently. The positive responses were also perceived as response for the preservation and use of Gondi language in the education and administration. The analysis result shows that the young generation is keen to learn Gondi language and shows positive attitude towards their mother tongue.

5. Revitalization Process of Gondi

Effort is going on to revitalize Gondi language by developing a standardized Gondi language for official use and remove the communication gap among the Gondi speakers of different states due to their mutually unintelligible dialects and emergence of many hybrid varieties which completely deviated from the original language of the community. Since Gonds of different states speak different Gondi due to numerous reasons, developing a standard variety will be a much complicated task. In each state the language has been influenced by the dominant language. Every state is working differently in promoting the language and the main issue is that Gondi has been developed separately in each place with no central coordination. In Telugu-speaking regions, the initiative to promoting the language is continuing and a lot of works have been done on the language. ⁷Leveling Gondi as a vulnerable language in UNESCO's Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger prompted a group of people to put together the country's first

⁷Majumdar, Meghna. This Indian language can be written by only 100 people. www.thehindu.com/society accessed in April 2018

Gondi dictionary. The project is spearheaded by Shubhranshu Choudhury, founder of CGNetSwara, a voice-based portal that allows people in the Central Gondwana region to report local news by making a phone call. Shubhranshu Choudhury, the founder of CGNetSwara viewed that there is need for a standard Gondi language for education, administration and even journalism. This is even more urgent in the conflicted regions the Gondi tribes inhabit, over and beyond the cultural need of preserving songs, folk tales, etc. that the tribe has been handing down orally till date. The initiative has created a landmark by producing first standard dictionary in Gondi which has been printed in Devanagari script. CGNetSwara has been working with the representatives of six Gondi dialects to compile a thesaurus.

6. Conclusion

The study reveals that Gondi of Madhya Pradesh has deviated completely from its ancestral language and now it no longer remains as a Dravidian language. Due to constant influence of Hindi or a variety of Hindi language especially Chhattisgarhi, it gives rise to a new hybrid variety which is a mixture of Hindi and Chhattisgarhi languages. Thus, we can say that the prevalent variety among the Gonds of the area under study, is a hybrid variety, which is a variety of Chhattisgarhi and mutually intelligible to Chhattisgarhi speakers. Since, it shows more similar features of Chhattisgarhi, we may conclude by saying that it is a new variety of that language. The Gonds of the area under study refer it as “Dehatibhasa”. It means local language. The Gonds of the particular area under study do write their family name in order to safeguard their own caste or by writing their surname but their ancestral language is already extinct and even the particular variety which is used by them now, is also in the course of extinction. The new generations of the Gonds cease to use the particular variety. Being a language of minorities, Gondi is not introduced as a medium of instruction in schools and the tribal children are taught through Hindi medium right from the primary level. Like any other tribal languages, the present variety is also decaying due to the influence of standard language. The prevalent language spoken by the Gondi speakers of the selected areas is more similar to Chhattisgarhi and Hindi.

Indian tribal languages demonstrate the lifestyle and history of many of the famous tribes of India. Tribal tradition and practices encompass all aspects of Indian culture and civilization, yet this awareness is often lacking in popular consciousness and the tribal contributions to Indian philosophy, language and custom have often gone unrecognized or been undervalued by historians and social scientists. With the initiative of University Grants Commission (UGC), many central universities of India have established full-fledged Centres for preservation and promotion of endangered languages. Through these centres, long term research will be undertaken for documentation, conservation, and promotion of endangered languages exclusively all over India.

It is our noble responsibility of each individual to take initiative to preserve endangered languages of the world and enrich languages. With proper education and preservation of linguistic human rights, which means having the right to choose the language or languages for communication in a private or public atmosphere, we can provide a solution to the problem. Preservation and conservation of tribal languages are vital. Due to the continuous influence of prestigious languages and receiving formal education in second language, the new generation is gradually in the process of losing the new variety, which is used by their parents in all domains.

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APPENDIX –I

WORD LIST

Name of the Respondent:

Address:

Mobile no:

Age:

Mother Tongue:

Any other Languages

Known:

Education:

Instruction: Give the Gondi words for the English words listed below----

	ENGLISH	GONDI
1	ANIMAL	
2	ALL	
3	AND	
4	ASHES	
5	BACK	
6	BAD	
7	BARK	
8	BECAUSE	
9	BIG	
10	BIRD	
11	BITE	
12	BLACK	
13	BLOOD	
14	BLOW	
15	BANANA	

16	BANGLES	
17	BROTHER ELDER	
18	BOOK	
19	CHILD	
20	CLOUD	
21	COLD	
22	COME	
23	COUNT	
24	CUT	
25	DAY	
26	DIE	
27	DIG	
28	DIRTY	
29	DOG	
30	DRINK	
31	DRY	
32	DULL	
33	DUST	
34	EAR	
35	EARTH	
36	EAT	
37	EGG	
38	EYE	
39	FATHER	
40	FISH	
41	FRUIT	
42	GOOD	
43	GREEN	
44	HAIR	
45	HAND	
46	HE	
47	HEAD	
48	HEAR	
49	HEART	
50	HEAVY	
51	HUSBAND	
52	I	
53	ICE	

54	LAUGH	
55	MAN	
56	MOON	
57	MOTHER	
58	NAME	
59	NECK	
60	NEAR	
61	PERSON	
62	PLAY	
63	RAIN	
64	RIVER	
65	SEA	
66	SISTER	
67	SEE	
68	SKY	
69	SLEEP	
70	SMELL	
71	SNAKE	
72	STAR	
73	SUN	
74	TAIL	
75	TONGUE	
76	THEY	
77	TREE	
78	WATER	
79	WE	
80	WHITE	
81	WHERE	
82	WHEN	
83	WIFE	
84	WOMAN	
85	WRITE	
86	BROTHER	
87	COOK	
88	DANCE	
89	EIGHT	
90	HUNDRED	
91	SEVEN	

92	TWENTY	
93	WORK	
94	VILLAGE	
95	TRAIN	
96	God	
97	House	
98	Language	
99	Milk	
100	mango	

APPENDIX -II

QUESTIONNAIRE:

NAME:

GENDER: MALE/FEMALE

AGE:

CLASS:

CATEGORY:

GEN/OBC/ST

Language known:

Please translate the following sentences into Gondi Language:

1. Nita is eating a mango
2. Kamal is eating a ripe mango.
3. Kamal cut the mango.
4. The children cut the mango with a knife
5. Sita ate the mango in the bus.
6. Rupam ate the mango in the morning
7. The child ate all the sweets.
8. I do not go to school.
9. We will not go to Jaipur tomorrow.
10. I did not go to school yesterday.
11. Neither my mother came nor my sister.
12. The old elephant did not die
13. Come in
14. Do not come in
15. Please sit down
16. Sit down
17. Admission is prohibited
18. Get lost
19. What is your name?
20. Where do you stay?

21. How are you?
22. When are you going home?
23. Why are you going to Delhi?
24. Who is he/she?
25. How much did you get?
26. Have you eaten?
27. Shall I come tomorrow?
28. Have you eaten?
29. Did you see the paper today?
30. Will you be cooking today at home?
31. What do you think he is thinking?
32. Which one is your brother?
33. He was walking slowly slowly.
34. He came again and again.
35. Who all come to the party?
36. What all did he eat?
37. How often (when) will you do to Jaipur?
38. Where all Ram found Sita's ornaments?
39. He got tired of sitting sitting.
40. I got bored writing assignments.
41. She spoke while eating.
42. The child fell down while walking on the footpath.
43. Give me hot hot coffee
44. Red red apples are juicy.
45. Bring sweet sweet mangoes.
46. Give me little little of every variety of sweets.
47. Don't come after me.
48. Sometime or the other he will come back to me.