

8. Adjectives

An adjective is a word used to *qualify* a noun or pronoun. To "qualify" means to limit the meaning or to make the meaning more definite by telling *what kind*, *which one* or *how many*. Adjectives in Telugu are indeclinable and occur most often before the noun (or pronoun) they qualify. Telugu adjectives fall in four broad classes: basic, derived, positional and bound.

Basic adjectives are always adjectives and always appear in the adjectival position.

Telugu.....	Pronunciation in RTS.....	Example...
	A sa-la-hA	<i>That</i> advice
	I ma-ni-shi	<i>This</i> person
?	E U-ru?	<i>Which</i> village?/town?/city?
ì	pra-ti-rO-jU	<i>Every</i> day
0	o-ka rU-pA-yi	<i>One</i> rupee
0	ce-ri o-ka rU-pA-yi	<i>One</i> rupee <i>each</i> (with two to share)
0	ta-lA o-ka rU-pA-yi	<i>One</i> rupee <i>per head</i> (with many to share)

Some times derived adjectives are formed by telling *what kind*.

Telugu.....	Pronunciation in RTS.....	Example...
Eì	e-rra cI-ra	<i>red</i> saree
»û	te-lIa kA-ru	<i>white</i> car

Sometimes derived adjectives are formed by telling *how many*.

Telugu.....	Pronunciation in RTS.....	Example...
û	cA-lA kA-ra-NA-lu	<i>several</i> reasons
ûp	A-ru kA-ku-lu	<i>six</i> crows

Most adjectives often come before the noun they modify, but *predicative adjectives* come after the noun/pronoun they modify.

œ 7 ... rA-mu-Du po-Du-ggA ka-ni-pi-stA-Du... Ramudu appears **tall**.

Derived adjectives are obtained from nouns, adverbs or verbs. Adjectives derived from names either convey "belonging to" or describe properties of objects. Adjectives of the former category are shown below. Notice how the oblique stem of the noun/pronoun is formed in the first five cases.

...Noun/Pronoun...	...Adjective.....Example...
l » , i-llu	l , iM-Ti	iM-Ti ka-ppu = house roof

I

¶ nu-yyi	, nU-ti	nU-ti nI-ru = well water
, mI-ru	, mI	mI pE-ru = your name
, mE-mu	, mA	mA U-ru = our village
¶ ce-yyi	, cE-ti	cE-ti ga-Di-yA-raM = hand (wrist) watch
§ , ce-TTu	§ , ce-TTu	§ ¶ ce-TTu ko-mma = tree branch

1. Adjectives Describing Properties of Objects

Some adjectives are derived from names that describe properties of objects. These adjectives typically end in (-ni) or (-Ti), (A-Ti), (-ai-na) as shown below. The first table below gives examples of *qualitative* properties. The next table gives examples of *numerical* properties.

...Noun...	...Adjective.....Example...
	» te-lla	» ¶ , te-lla gu-rraM = white horse
te-lu-pu	» , te-lla-ni	» ¶ , ta-lla-ni gu-rraM
	» , te-lla-Ti	» ¶ , ta-lla-Ti gu-rraM
	» , te-lla-nai-na	» ¶ , ta-lla-nai-na gu-rraM
	, te-lu-pai-na	¶ , ta-lu-pai-na gu-rraM
	, tI-pi	, tI-pi mA-Ta = sweet word
tI-pi	¶ , ti-yya-ni	¶ , ti-yya-ni mA-Ta
	¶ , ti-yya-Ti	¶ , ti-yya-Ti mA-Ta
	¶ , ti-yya-nai-na	¶ , ti-yya-nai-na mA-Ta
	, tI-pai-na	, tI-pai-na mA-Ta
	, ba-ru-vu	¶ , ba-ru-vu pu-sta-kaM = heavy book
ba-ru-vu	, ba-ru-vA-Ti	¶ , ba-ru-vA-Ti pu-sta-kaM
	, ba-ru-vai-na	¶ , ba-ru-vai-na pu-sta-kaM
	, vE-Di	¶ , vE-Di kAphI = hot coffee
vE-Di	, vE-Dai-na	¶ , vE-Dai-na kA-phI
	, maM-ci	, maM-ci bA-lu-Du = good boy
maM-ci-ta-naM		
A	A , aM-da-mai-na A	¶ aM-da-mai-na bo-mma = beautiful doll
aM-daM		

The table below gives examples of adjectives describing *numerical* properties of objects.

...Noun.....	...Adjective.....Example...
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	, nA-lu-gu	, nA-lu-gu	μ , nA-lu-gu bo-mma-lu
four	four	four	Four pictures
	, nA-lu-gu	, nA-lu-ga-va	, nA-lu-ga-va va-ru-sa
four		, nA-lu-gO	, nA-lu-gO va-ru-sa
	fourth		Fourth row
	, A-ru	, A-ra-va	, A-ra-va pA-Ta
six		, A-rO	, ArO pA-Ta
	sixth		Sixth song

2. Adjectives Derived From Pronouns

...Pronoun...	...Adjective.....Example...
A	, a-ta-nu	, A bA-lu-Du
He	That	That boy
I	, i-ta-nu	, I bA-li-ka
He	This	This girl
	, I-me	, I bA-li-ka
She	This	This girl
E	?, e-va-ru?	౧ , E kA-ru?
Who	Which	Which car?

Note. These three adjectival forms, namely (A), I (I) and (E) are known widely in Telugu grammar as “the triplet.”

3. Adjectives Derived From Verbs

There is a wide variety of adjectives derived from verbs. These fall into different categories depending on the tense of the verb. The reader is advised to return to this topic after studying the chapters on Verb.

Verb.....	...Tense.....	...Verbal Adjective.....Meaning...
	Past	, vaM-Di-na	one that was cooked
to cook	Present	◦, vaM-Du-tU-nna	one being cooked
	Future	, vaM-Da-bO-yE	one that will be cooked
	Present perfect	, vaM-De-Di	???
	Negative	, vaM-Da-ni	one that was not cooked

All these verbal adjectives exhibit the following generic structure.

stem + {tense/negative} suffix

past tense: + l =

-----: cE-yu + i-na = cE-si-na

non-past tense: + E =

-----: cE-yu + e-Di = cE-se-Di

negation: + =

-----: cE-yu + ya-ni = cE-ya-ni

Adjectives are used *attributively* (preceding nouns which they qualify)

Telugu..... Pronunciation in RTS..... Example...

	maM-ci bA-lu-Du	<i>good</i> boy
౧ »	pe-dda iM-TIO	in (the) <i>big</i> house
౧ ౧ ౧	pe-dda pe-dda i-LLa-lIO	in <i>very big</i> houses

Adjectives are used *predicatively* (i.e., following nouns) they qualify

Telugu..... Pronunciation in RTS..... Example...

E ౧ U	gO-Da e-ttu-gA uM-di	The wall is <i>tall</i>
౧౧ E ౧ U °	pu-sta-kA-lu e-rra-gA u-nnA-yi	The books are <i>red</i>

Some nouns can be converted into adjectives by suffixing them with - ౧ or - ౧ as shown below.

A ౧౧ = luck	A ౧౧ ౧ = luckily
౧ = accident	౧ ౧ = accidentally
౧ N = grammar	౧ N ౧ = grammatically

4. Adjectives as Predicates

l ౧ , i-di ko-tta-di = this is *new*.

l ౧ , i-vi ko-tta-vi = these are *new*.

A , a-di pA-ta-di = that is *old*.

A ,, a-vi pA-ta-vi = those are *old*.

5. Other Properties of Adjectives

(a) In Telugu, unlike in Hindi and Sanskrit, there are no gender differences in adjectives. Notice the three examples below.

A **శ** = good boy;

A **మ** = good girl;

ప **శ** = good dog;

ⓐ A **శ** = big boy; eldest son;

ⓑ A **మ** = eldest daughter; big girl;

ⓒ **ప** **శ** = big dog;

(b) When adjectives ending in A are followed by the noun they modify, an additional **ని**, or optionally gets appended to the adjective.

» **క** **ని** , » **క** **ని** , » **క** **ని** = black horse

(c) Sometimes nouns can be used as adjectives.

వెండి = *silver* plate

కాప = *copper* pot

బ్రాంజ్ = *bronze* bell

(d) Adjectives can be used to modify nouns as well as pronouns.

,

(e) Adjectives borrowed from Sanskrit match the nouns they modify in gender, number and case (i. e., *vibhakti*).

నీ , rA-mu-Du yO-gyu-Du

నీ , A-me yO-gyu-rA-lu

నీ , vA-ru yO-gyu-lu

నీ , A pa-ni yO-gya-mai-na-di

(f) Adjectives derived from verbs typically end in - **ని** or -A **ని** .

చదివి , ca-di-vi-na vA-Du; **చదివి** , ca-di-vi-na-di

☛ , va-cci-na-vA-Du; ☛ , va-cci-na-di

ü , pa-ni-ki-rA-ni vA-Du; ü , pa-ni-ki-rA-ni-di

6. Adjectives Borrowed from English

A ê, *American* president

, *Chinese* premier

, *Japanese* garden

7. Vocabulary

E	e-ru-pu	red		na-lu-pu	black
	te-lu-pu	white		☛ pa-su-pu-pa-cca	yellow
p	☛ A-ku-pa-cca	green		nI-laM	blue
	U-dA	purple/violet		raM-gu	color
p	ku-Di	right	E	e-Da-ma	left
	ba-ru-vu	heavy		tE-li-ka	light/easy
I š	i-kka-Da	here	A š	a-kka-Da	there
E š ?	e-kka-Da?	where?	E ?	e-ppu-Du?	when?
I	i-ppu-Du	now	A	a-ppu-Du	then
I »	i-Ilu	house	I ¼	i-LLu	houses
	baM-Di	vehicle	1	ba-LLu	vehicles
ü	kA-lu	leg	ü ¼	kA-LLu	legs
	pai-na	up	ü	kiM-da	down
	muM-du	front		ve-na-ka	back/behind
	ba-ya-Ta	outside		IO-pa-la	inside
	ve-lu-tu-ru	light		cI-ka-Ti	darkness
ü	kA-du	no, it is not so		IE-du	no, it doesn't exist
	IE-ta raM-gu	light color		mu-da-ra raM-gu	dark color
pi	ku-rra-ta-naM	childishness	ü	peM-ki-ta-naM	mischievousness
	maM-ci-ta-naM	goodness	±	go-ppa-ta-naM	greatness

Exercises

1. Read the following aloud and then translate into English. The answers are given at the end of the book.

A Eì ū . A ū . A A ū . A 0 A A μ U ° .

A » ©. Eì ū . » 0 ϕ šU ° . p š 0
U ° .

2. Read the following aloud

»	?	mI-ru te-lu-gu mA-TIA-Da-ga-larA?	Can you speak Telugu? (respectful)
p	.	nA-ku te-lu-gu bA-gA rA-du.	I do not know Telugu well.
ϕ	°	te-lu-gu nE-rcu-kuM-Tu-nnA-nu.	(I am) learning Telugu
μ	»	koM-ceM ne-mma-di-gA mA-TIA-DaM-Di	Speak a bit slowly (respectful)
...			
A	° ?	E-mi-Ti a-nnA-ru?	What did you (respectful)/he/ he say?
A	° ?	E-mi-Ti a-nnA-Du?	What did he (familiar) say?
I	ü	Sa-ni-vA-raM mA iM-Ti-ki raM-Di.	Come (respectful) to our home on Saturday.
ŪN	E š	maM-du-la du-kA-NaM e-kka-Da uM-di?	Where is the drug store? (neutral)
U ?			
®	E š U ?	pe-dda ba-jA-ru e-kka-Da uM-di?	Where is the main business district? (neutral)
A š ŪE	¼	a-kka-Di-ki e-lA ve-LLA-li?	How to go there? (neutral)
	?	I vI-dhi pE-ru E-mi-Ti?	What is the name of this street? (neutral)
		I mE-pu-lO cU-piM-caM-Di	Show me on this map (respectful).
Ū	!	I kA-gi-taM mI-da rA-yaM-Di	Write on this paper (respectful).
A	!	a-lA-gA!	Is that so! (neutral)
	!	te-li-ya-du!	Do not know! (neutral)
	!	cU-piM-caM-Di!	show! (respectful)
A p	!	a-nu-kuM-TA-nu!	I think so! (neutral)
	!	Su-bhaM!	Good luck! (neutral)

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