CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION.

1-0 Name of the dialect, Telangi: Its relation with the name of the tribe, Telanga; and its kinship with the name of the region Telangana:-

Telangi is a less known dialect of Telugu. It is a caste-dialect spoken by the Kapus and the Jhar Kapus. The Telangas are also known as Jhar Telangas. The spread of the Telangi speaking community of Bastar, is limited to certain geographical regions in the district. In Andhra Pradesh Telagas (not Telangas) and Kapus are treated as one caste and inter-marriages are permissible between them. All these Telangi speaking people ethnically belong to the Telugu Community. Therefore it can be said that the name of the dialect has ethnic associations. Its association with the Telanga people is intimate. But, that it is limited to certain groups of villages, lends it a regional character. The dialect is spoken in about fifteen villages spread over in Bijapur Tahsil. These villages form several speech islands within a predominantly a Gondi speaking region.

1-1 Its connection with the terms Telugu, Telangu, Temuncu:-

The name of the Telangi dialect has close kinship with the region known as Telangana. The Telangana region comprises all the Telugu speaking districts of the former Hyderabad State which have now become a vital part of the present Andhra Pradesh. Of the Telangana region, Warangal and Khammammet districts are
contiguous to Bijapur Tahsil, where Telugu is spoken by a good number of people. Indeed, the Telugu spoken in Bijapur Tahsil is hardly distinguishable, in its phonology, lexicon, grammar and syntax, from the kind of Telugu that is spoken in Telangana. The name 'Telangi' is obviously associated with Telugu. Other forms of the name Telugu are Telungu, Telinga, Tailanga, Tenugu, Temungu. All these names are just variant forms of the noun Telugu which had undergone phonetic changes.

It is not out of place to mention here that there is a non-Brahmin community in Andhra which is called Telaga referred to above. Among the Brahmins, also there is a subsect called Telaganya. From all this it is clear that 'Telangi' is not only an old ethnic name connecting it with the Telugu speaking community, but also a name connecting it with the Telagas in Andhra Pradesh and Telangas in Bastar. Although no evidence is given to show that the Telangi-speaking Telangas of Bastar are just the Telugu-speaking Telagas of Andhra, the Telangi dialect has linguistic affinity besides geographical proximity with the Telugu of Telangana.

But, it should not be construed that Telangi is just another name of the kind of Telugu spoken in Telangana and in good many parts of Bijapur Tahsil. On the other hand Telangi is very much different from the Telugu spoken in the rest of Bijapur Tahsil. It may, however, be presumed that they were probably one at some distant past. But the present facts do not encourage the view that they are one and the same dialect. P.G. Agrawal in his Human Geography of Bastar unequivocally distinguishes between Telangi and Telugu. About Telangi, he
say, "the so called Telangi dialect is rare and scattered in a few villages of Bijapur Tahsil, eg. Rallepalli and Gonga sample villages, instead of forming any well defined region. This is owing to the fact that some immigrants from South India have settled at certain places. They are called Telangases and their dialect is called Telangi. It differs from the dialects of Bison-Horn Madia and Dorla tribes in whose midst they are settled." (p.273).

About Telugu, P.C. Agrawal says, "There is only one sample village, Pollem, in Bijapur Tahsil which has the Telugu Telugu dialect. This village is situated on the South-Western border of the district. Beyond that border is the Telugu speaking region. Therefore, Telugu has spread into just a few villages on this border" (p.274). I cannot, however, agree with the view that Telugu has spread into just a few villages on the border. On the contrary, during my field work, I came across a large number of villages where Telugu is spoken as the mother-tongue or is fairly understood by the other speech communities in the region. The speakers of Telugu consider Telangi, an 'Apabhramsa' form of Telugu, by which they mean that it is the relic of a form of Telugu spoken in remote past. Some Telugu speakers make fun of Telangi speakers by calling them "ikkadimi tikkadimi" speakers. By this they mean that Telangi speakers speak a language which sounds to them exotic and outlandish. It is evident from this that linguistic differences between Telangi and Telugu are so pronounced that even a layman cannot miss them. These differences are presumably due to the hilly terrain and dense forests into which Telugu speakers migrated and due to isolation of these speakers from the mainstream of the Telugu speaking community, and the resultant progressive deviation of the language.
Classification and Family relationship

More than a century ago Bishop R. Caldwell established family relations among the Dravidian group of languages. He enumerated thirteen languages in the Dravidian speech family. His list of Dravidian languages includes six cultivated dialects, Tamil, Malayalam, Telugu, Canarese, Tulu, Kudagu or Coorg and six uncultivated dialects; Tuda, Kota, Gond Khond or Kui, Oraon and Rajmahal. The thirteenth dialect in his enumeration was Brohui. He has, however, given it a separate status in the list of Dravidian dialects, "because the Dravidian element contained in it bears but a small proportion to the rest of its component elements". The editors of the third revised edition of Caldwell's A comparative Grammar of the Dravidian or South Indian family of languages (University of Madras, 1961) mention in the foot-note, "the census of 1911 includes Brohui in the Dravidian family, and there are 170,998 persons speaking that language. There are also two other languages included in the group, namely, the Malhar spoken by 236 persons and the Kolami spoken by 24,074 persons". (p.39).

A good number of languages have been added to the list since Caldwell's enumeration. Dr. K. Mahadeva Sastry in his "Historical Grammar of Telugu" mentions twenty-one languages as belonging to the Dravidian speech family. It is note-worthy that Dr. Sastry's list does not include two of the languages, Rajmahal and Oraon mentioned by Caldwell. An overall picture of the languages which number twenty two at present may be diagrammatically represented as follows:

1. Mahadeva Sastry, K.J Historical Grammar of Telugu, Sri Venkateswara University Postgraduate Centre, Anantapur 1969 (p.18)
North Dravidian Central Dravidian South Dravidian

North Dravidian

Brahui Kurukh Malto

Central Dravidian

Kolami Parji Naiki Gondi Konda Gadaba Ollari Kui Kuti Kangu

South Dravidian

Mala- Tamil Tulu Toda Kodagu Kota Kannad Badga Telugu Yalam

1. Bh. Krishnamurti mentions Kuya among his list of twenty two Dravidian languages, and Emenean mentions Madan is his list of twenty one language. But none of them mentions Badga in their list. Further, Emenean omits Ollari in his list.

Moulton, The Hague,

a. Competative Dravidian Studies P. 309-310
b. The Non-Literary Dravidian Languages P. 334.
Telugu stands midway between the South Dravidian and Central Dravidian Groups. While it retains its kinship with both groups, it has developed its own modern regional dialects. They are chiefly as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coastal Telugu</th>
<th>Central Telugu</th>
<th>Rayalaseema</th>
<th>Telangana</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Srikakulam &amp;</td>
<td>(Krishna, Guntur,</td>
<td>Telugu</td>
<td>Telugu(former</td>
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<tr>
<td>Visakhapatnam</td>
<td>East &amp; West</td>
<td>(ceded districts)</td>
<td>Hyderbad</td>
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<tr>
<td>districts)</td>
<td>Godavari districts)</td>
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<td>State)</td>
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This, however, is a broad classification and does not include the caste dialects like those of the Cencus, Yanadi, Yerukala, Budabukkala and the dialects of fishermen in various regions, specially in the coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh. It is evident from this classification that Telangi, which is subjected to analysis in the following chapters, is more akin to the Telugu spoken in the Telangana region, and is therefore twice removed from Central Telugu which is, by and large, accepted as standard Telugu.

1. Krishnamurti, Dh, Telugu Verbal Bases, University of California, 1969 (Chapter III)
1.4. A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE TELANGI SPEAKING REGION

1.4. The Telangi-speakers have little sense of history. There are no documents to prove the martial prowess or any such distinguishing achievement of the community in the past. In the absence of any such documents, one has to rely solely on anecdotes, hearsays and legends orally communicated from one generation to another. Although the sources of this nature are of considerable help in reconstructing the history of the community, the history thus reconstructed is of dubious nature and therefore no attempt is made here to use such sources as authoritative documents.¹

The Telanga tribe in Bastar has a long history dating back to the 9th Century! From the middle of the 9th century to the middle of the 12th century, there was a Nagavamsi Dynasty of the Telanga tribe ruling what was then known as Chokrakota Kingdom. The ruins and some of the Telugu inscriptions at Barsur, Bhairamgarh, Dantewada, Kuruspal and such other places indicate that an advanced Telanga civilization flourished in the region. During the three centuries, there were number of invasions by Eastern Chalukya, Chola and Western Chalukya and Hoyasala princes. But the Nagavamsi dynasty of the Telanga Kings remained intact. In the 13th century, most part of Bastar came

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¹ For historical information I am indebted to the following sources:

(a) Grigson, Sir Wilfred, The Maria Conts of Bastar, 1938, O.U.P., P.3-6
(b) Rai Bahadur Hiralal, Inscriptions in the C.P. and Berar 1916, Nagpur, P.144-157.
(c) E.A. de Brett, Central Provinces Gazetteers, Chhattisgarh Feudatory States, 1909, Times Press, Bombay PP 36-38.
(d) Russels and Hiralal, Tribes and Castes of the Central Province Vol. III PP 238-42.
under nominal suzerainty of Kakatiya rulers of Warangal. So, when Annam Deo fled to Bastar in 1410 following the Mohammedan conquest of Warangal, he did not arrive in any totally alien land. After Annam Deo's flight into Bastar, the Kakatiya Dynasty was established in the region. The present royal family of Bastar belongs to the Kakatiya Dynasty, which claims its descent from the Pandu Dynasty of the epic age.

The present Telanga tribe is not, therefore, recent infiltration into Bastar. They migrated into the region during the rule of the Nagavamsi Dynasty of Telugu rulers. The present Telanga tribes and their villages are found chiefly around the old Telugu kingdoms like Dantewada, Bijapur, Barasur, Bhairangarh and Jagargonda. With the establishment of Kakatiya Dynasty, in the words of Grigson, "they were cut off from Telangana when they were abandoned to Maria and Koya Dukhs the south as a barrier against the Mohammedan." The Telanga tribe today is also known as Jhad Telanga and it is under this name that they are described by Russel and Hiralal in their "Tribes and Castes of the Central Province". Grigson states that the Telangas have forgotten Telangi and speak Gondi or Halwi. The present fieldwork does not attest this fully. It is true that many of the Telangas have forgotten Telangi and have adopted the Maria and Gondi way of life. But there are still some villages which have survived like Telangi speech islands in the midst of Gondi speaking region. It is appropriate to call their language Telangi, as it differs from regular Telugu spoken by recent immigrants from Andhra Pradesh, particularly from Telangana.
Almost everyone in rural Bastar is a variable polyglot. There are a number of people who know five or six languages of the region. Most of the Telangi speakers know the language of the neighbouring tribe in their village. Since the Muriyas are the commonly found tribe in Bijapur Tahsil, most of the Telangi speakers know the Muriya dialect. Some Telangi speakers who have wider social contacts know Halwi, which is one of the important languages in the region. The educated among Telangi speakers, however, know Hindi tolerably well.

1.7. OTHER LANGUAGES AND DIALECTS SPOKEN IN THE REGION

Bastar is a complex of many languages and dialects. In Bijapur Tahsil the most prominent languages are Muriya, Hindi and Telugu. Hindi is spoken by townsmen, especially by traders and the educated employees. Telugu is spoken by a number of people who migrated to this region in recent times. Most of the Telugu speakers have contacts with Andhra Pradesh and therefore, have preserved the cultural affinities with the Andhras. Muria is spoken by the Murias, also known as Gottes among others. Halwi and Dorli are also heard here and there.
1.8. Influence of other languages and dialects.

In a dissertation of this sort, it is not possible, nor is it considered necessary, to measure the extent to which the other dialects of the region have influenced the Telangi dialect. The most conspicuous areas of influence may, however, be briefly mentioned. Unlike in standard Telugu a good number of words in Telangi end in consonants. This is presumably because of the influence of the local dialects, especially Muria, Halwi and Hindi. For example, the Telangi words like pagall (afternoon), lompat (inside), wa:nd (he) wa:in (they), Ne:in (I), e:ra:Y (stone), e:la:ng (how) are available in standard Telugu with vowel endings.

In the sphere of vocabulary, the influence of the other languages or dialects is more clearly seen. For example, words like baddi (carpenter), Ko:td (place) Matlabi (selfish) can be traced to Hindi or Hindustani. Words like a:mi (land), Kappur (camphor) are corrupt forms of Sanskrit words, which possibly came into Telangi by way of Hindi. It may, however, be mentioned here that, such words as can be traced to Hindi and Sanskrit are extremely limited. Some words like Jo:ka (friend, friendship) duppi ma:inka (deer) can be traced to the influence of the Muria, jaru:raiana (important) is a hybrid formed by adding a native suffix-eyina (adjective indicator) to a Hindustani system. The Telangi word wisam:nu (poison) is possibly Telugu word wisam, which was itself borrowed sanskrit.
A full description of the influence of the other dialects and languages on Telangi requires as complete an account as is practicable of the characteristics of all the dialects and languages with which the present dialect has come in contact that, however, is not attempted here.

1-9. Previous work done on the dialect

Telangi has been one of the dialects less known to linguists. For one thing, the student of dialects has not taken cognizance of Telangi. It was taken for Telugu or for an unimportant variety of Condi. In the past, Glassfor, K. Nathakur and Grigson made a few brief references to Telangi. Of these, Grigson considered Telangi to be a dialect of Condi. Among the present day studies of the dialects of Bastar, a mention must be made of *Bastar Zile Ki Devesa Boluven* by R.C. Mehrotra and H.L. Shukla. The authors of this yet unpublished work, have devoted a chapter to Telangi or Telgi as they call it. They have given a brief, but useful outline of the phonological and morphological features of Telangi, besides, a brief mention of its family affinity with Telugu and its geographical situation. P.C. Agrawal in his *Humun Geography of Bastar* has made a very brief reference to Telangi. Beyond these works, to the knowledge of the present researcher, no other work has been done on this dialect.