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Telugu grammar

Sandhi or joining

Sandhi is the fusion of sounds across word boundaries and the alteration of sounds due to neighboring sounds or due to the grammatical function of adjacent words.

Telugu sandhis can be divided into native ones and those derived from Sanskrit ones.

Sanskrit Sandhis

These sandhis usually take place when the two words undergoing Sandhi are words borrowed from Sanskrit.

Savarṇadīrghasandhi (Vowel lengthening)

The *savarṇadīrgha sandhi*, from Sanskrit *savarṇa* 'same sound' and *dīrgha* 'long', this sandhi takes place when the first word ends in the same vowel that the second word starts with. The two vowels join to form one long vowel.

Examples of the *savarṇadīrgha sandhi*

Initial word	Final word	Result
deva	ālayamu	dēvālayamu
pārvati	īśvaruḍu	pārvatīśvaruḍu
aṇu	utpatti	aṇūtpatti

Guṇasandhi (Vowel raising)

The *guṇasandhi* takes place when a word final *-a* is followed by either *-i*, *-u* or *-ṛ*. The sandhi yields *-ē*, *-ō* and *-ar* respectively. *-ē*, *-ō* and *-ar* are collectively called the *guṇas*, hence the name.

Examples of the *guṇasandhi*

Initial word	Final word	Result
mahā	indra	mahēndra
dhana	utpatti	dhanōtpatti
dēva	ṛṣi	dēvarṣi

Vṛddhisandhi (Diphthongization)

The *vr̥ddhisandhi*, from Sanskrit *vr̥ddhi*-, 'growth', takes place when a word final *-a* is followed by *-ē* or *-ai*, *-ō* or *-au*, and *-ar* or *-ār*, and yields *-ai*, *-au* and *-ār* respectively. *-ai*, *-au* and *-ār* are collectively called the *vr̥ddhis*, hence the name.

Examples of the *vr̥ddhisandhi*

Initial word	Final word	Result
vasudha	ēka	vasudhaika
mahā	aikyata	mahaikyata
vīra	ōjassu	vīraujassu
divya	auśadhamu	divyauśadhamu

Yaṇādēśasandhi (Glide insertion)

The *yaṇādēśasandhi* takes place when word final *-i*, *-u* or *-r* is followed by a non-similar vowel. The sandhi yields either *-y-*, *-v-* or *-r-* respectively. These are known as the *yaṇās*.

Examples of the *yaṇādēśasandhi*

Initial word	Final word	Result
ati	āśa	atyāśa
su	āgatamu	svāgatamu
pitṛ	ājña	pitṛājña

Native sandhis

These sandhis usually occur when one or both of the words is a native Telugu word, or is a Sanskrit borrowing that is treated as such (ex. *iṣṭamu*).

Akārasandhi (Elision of a)

This sandhi occurs when a word final *-a* is followed by any vowel. The word final *-a* is removed, and the following vowel takes its place.

Examples of *akārasandhi*

Initial word	Final word	Result
iṅkā	ēṇṭi	iṅkēṇṭi
puṭṭina	illu	puṭṭinillu
amma	aṇṭē	ammaṇṭē
teliyaka	uṇḍenu	teliyakuṇḍenu

Ikārasandhi

This sandhi occurs when a word final *-i* is followed by any vowel. The word final *-i* is removed, and the following vowel takes its place.

Examples of *ikārasandhi*

Initial word	Final word	Result
mari	eppuḍu	mareppuḍu
vāḍi	illu	vāḍillu
ēmi	aṇṭivi	ēmaṇṭivi
ēmi	a(y)inadi	ēma(y)inadi
ēmi	undi	ēmundi

Ukārasandhi

This sandhi occurs when a word final *-u* is followed by any vowel. The word final *-u* is removed, and the following vowel takes its place.

Example of *ukārasandhi*

Initial word	Final word	Result
ceppu	iṅkā	ceppiṅkā
vāḍu	evaḍu	vāḍevaḍu
nīllu	unnāyā	nīllunnāyā
vāḍu	annāḍu	vāḍannāḍu

Trikasandhi

One of the most complicated of the sandhis, the *trikasandhi* is of two forms:

1. When a final *-ā* *-ī* or *-ē* is followed by a non-clustered consonant, the vowel is shortened, and the unclustered consonant is geminated.
2. When the word *mūḍu* (three) is followed by a consonant, the word-final *-ḍu* is eliminated. This triggers the first rule of the *trikasandhi*, and the now-word-final *-ū* is shortened, and the following consonant is geminated. When the consonant is *l-*, sometimes it is geminated to *-ḷ-* instead.

Examples of the *trikasandhi*

Initial word	Final word	Result
ī	kālamu	ikkālamu
ē	cōṭu	eccōṭu
ā	bhaṅgi	abb ^h aṅgi
mūḍu	lōkamulu	mullōkamulu
mūḍu	kōṭi	mukkōṭi

Āmrēḍitasandhi

This sandhi deals with repeated words, i.e., pairs of same words. This sandhi forms some of the most used irregular-looking words in the language. It has three rules:

1. When a vowel-initial word is repeated, the final vowel of the first word is eliminated.
2. Word final forms of *ka* (*ka*, *ki*, *ku*, *ke*, etc.) of the first word are eliminated and the first rule is applied.
3. The *andādi* words (*anduku*, *iggulu*, *tumuru*, *tuniyalu*, etc.) when compounded lead to irregular forms.

Examples of the
āmreḍitasandhi

Word	Result
aura	auraura
endun	endendun
appaṭiki	appaṭappaṭiki
ūran	ūrūran
ceduru	cellāceduru
iggulu	irriggulu

Dviruktaṭakārasandhi

Sometimes regarded as a form of the *āmreḍitasandhi*, the *dviruktaṭakārasandhi* occurs when *kaḍādi* (*kaḍa*, *naḍuma*, *madhyāhnamu*, *bayalu*, etc.) words are compounded. A *dviruktaṭakāra*, a geminated *-ṭṭ-* forms from this sandhi, hence the name.

Examples of the *dviruktaṭakārasandhi*

Initial word	Final word	Result
madhyāhnamu	madhyāhnamu	miṭṭamadhyāhnamu
pagalu	pagalu	paṭṭapagalu
naḍuma	iṇṭlō	naṭṭiṇṭlō

Gasadadavādēśasandhi

- Trika Sandhi.
- Dugagama Sandhi.
- Saraladesha Sandhi
- Gasadadavadesha Sandhi.
- Rugagama Sandhi.
- Yadagama Sandhi.
- Prathametara Vibhakti Sandhi.
- Uchadadi sandhi.