

Notes

I'll accumulate various material here for quick reference. (very incomplete as of now)

Daily phrases

Plurals

Most nouns in Telugu form their plurals by adding on **-lu** or **!lu** at the end. The nouns sometimes change their stem slightly when this happens. There are a few exceptions to this rule, and these exceptions themselves follow certain patterns. English nouns or other imported nouns get pluralized similarly. Here are some of the patterns.

words that just add **-lu**

eluka ("mouse") -> **elukalu** ("mice")
kurčī ("chair") -> **kurčīlu** ("chairs")
rāju ("king") -> **rājulu** ("kings")
pāṭa ("song") -> **pāṭalu** ("songs")
car -> **car lu** [and many English loanwords]

words ending in **-am**: remove **-am**, add **-ālu**

pustakam ("book") -> **pustakālu** ("books")
varsham ("rain") -> **varshālu** ("rains")
simham ("lion") -> **simhālu** ("lions")

words ending in **-i**: remove **-i**, add **-ulu**

vidyārthi ("student") -> **vidyārthulu** ("students")
rātri ("night") -> **rātrulu** ("night")
katti ("knife") -> **kattulu** ("knives")
pilli ("cat") -> **pillulu** ("cats")

words ending in **-lu**: remove **-lu**, add **-!lu**

kālu ("leg") -> **kā!lu** ("legs")
vēlu ("finger") -> **vē!lu** ("fingers")
railu ("train") -> **rail!lu** ("trains")
mullu ("thorn") -> **mul!lu** ("thorns")

words ending in **-ru**: remove **-ru**, add **-l̥lu**

āḍavāru ("") -> **kāl̥lu** ("legs")

vēlu ("finger") -> **vēl̥lu** ("fingers")

railu ("train") -> **rail̥lu** ("trains")

Question words

Question words in Telugu mostly start with the sounds **e** or **ē**. Most of these words have two corresponding non-question words depending on the *distance in space, time, or some other dimension*, (a) *near form* (sound **i** or **ī**), referring to something *close by* and (b) *far form* (sound **a** or **ā**), referring to something *far away*.

| Question | Meaning | Near form | Meaning | Far form | Meaning |
|---------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| ekkaḍa | "where" | ikkaḍa | "here" | akkaḍa | "there" |
| eppuḍu | "when" | ippuḍu | "now" | appuḍu | "then" |
| elā | "how" | ilā | "like this" | alā | "like that" |
| enṭi | "what" | | | | |
| ēm | "what" | | | | |
| enduku | "why" | induku | "for this reason" | anduku | "for that reason" |
| enta | "how much" | inta | "this much" | anta | "that much" |
| ē | "which" (adj.) | ī | "this" (adj.) | ā | "that" (adj.) |
| ēdi | "which one" | idi | "this" | adi | "that" |
| evaru | "who" | vīru | "this person" | vāru | "that person" |

Pronouns

These are the words for "I", "you", "we", "it" etc. in all their different forms. For example, "I" can also be in the form "me", "to me", "for me", "from me", "with me". These are called *grammatical cases*. Take the sentence "I am reading his book to you" = **nēnu atani pustakānni nīku chaduvutunnānu**. In this, we have the following pronouns: **nēnu** = "I" (*nominative*), **atani** = "his" (*possessive*), and **nīku** = "to you" (*dative*, indirect object). These are the pronouns in the *nominative*, where they act as the main subject performing the action that the verb indicates. In the above sentence, **nēnu** = "I" is the subject, and not "him" or "you" or someone else.

Nominative pronouns (subject)

| Person | Singular | Plural |
|------------------|---|--|
| 1st | nēnu ("I") | mēmu/manamu ("we") |
| 2nd (inf.) | nuvvu ("you", inf.) | mīru ("you all") |
| 2nd (resp.) | mīru ("you", resp.) | mīru ("you all") |
| 3rd (obj.) | idi/adi ("this"/"that" or "it") | ivi/avi ("these"/"those" or "they") |
| 3rd (male) | atanu/āyana ("he", inf./resp.) | vāḷḷu ("they", inf.) |
| 3rd (fem.) | āme/āviḍa ("he", inf./resp.) | vāḷḷu ("they", inf.) |
| 3rd (very resp.) | vāru ("he/she/they", very resp.) | vāru ("they", very resp.) |

inf. -> informal, resp. -> respectful

idi, ivi -> "this", "these" (*near form*)

adi, avi -> "that", "those" (*far form*)

other 3rd person pronouns also have a *near form*

atanu -> **itanu**, **āyana** -> **īyana** ("that man" -> "this man")

āme -> **īme**, **āviḍa** -> **īviḍa** ("that woman" -> "this woman")

vāru -> **vīru**, **vāḷḷu** -> **vīḷḷu** ("that person"/ "those people" -> "this person"/ "these people")

The following are the various forms of the question word **evaru** = "who" in various grammatical cases. These are useful for expressing ideas like "whose", "to whom", "for whom" etc. The endings follow similar patterns as with other pronouns or nouns.

| Forms of evaru | Meaning |
|---------------------------|--|
| evari | "whose" (adj.) |
| evari-<i>dī</i> | "whose" (sing. pron.) |
| evari-<i>vī</i> | "whose" (pl. pron.) |
| evari-<i>nī</i> | "whom" (dir. obj. <i>accusative</i>) |
| evari-<i>ki</i> | "to whom" (indir. obj. <i>dative</i>) |
| evari-<i>kosam</i> | "for whom" |
| evari-<i>nunči</i> | "from whom" |
| evari-<i>tō</i> | "with whom" |
| evari-<i>valla</i> | "because of whom" |

Verbs

Unḍu = "to be"

The *infinitive form* of the verb "to be" is **unḍaḍam**, and this corresponds to the usage *to be* or *being* in English.

-aḍam makes the *infinitive* form of verbs. **nāku Telugu nērcūkōvaḍam ishtaṁ** = "I like to learn Telugu". **nērcūkōvaḍam** = "to learn"

The imperative form (command) is **unḍu**, as in **ikkaḍa unḍu** = "be here!". To make it respectful (request), attach **-anḍi** at the end, to make **unḍanḍi** = "please be". This is applicable to other verbs too - **čeyyi** = "do" -> **čeyyanḍi** = "please do".

-anḍi at the end of words and sentences makes them respectful. In fact, one can attach **-anḍi** to every word in a sentence, but that would sound funny.

Tenses

The three basic tenses in Telugu are the past tense, present tense and future tense. There are a bunch of other tenses and moods including perfective, completive, obligation, hortative etc. [check these names] that get formed using various participles and helper auxiliary verbs. The basic verb word in Telugu takes the following form: **STEM-TENSE-PERSON** (S-T-P). The verb stem might change between the different tenses and forms, and some forms of the verbs don't mark for the person endings.

For the verb **čeyyi** = "do", we have the following

PAST (-ā-): **nēnu cēsānu** [S-T-P: **cēs-ā-nu**] = "I did", **mīru cēsāru** [S-T-P: **cēs-ā-ru**] = "You (resp.) did"

FUTURE/HABITUAL (-tā-): **nēnu cēstānu** [S-T-P: **cēs-tā-nu**] = "I will do" / "I do", **mīru cēstāru** [S-T-P: **cēs-tā-ru**] = "You (resp.) will do" / "You (resp.) do"

PRESENT (-t-): **nēnu cēstunnānu** [S-T-P: **cēs-t-unnānu**] = "I am doing", **mīru cēstunnāru** [S-T-P: **cēs-t-unnāru**] = "You (resp.) are doing"

INFINITE (-aḍam): **nāku čeyyaḍam ishṭam** = "I like to do", **mīku čeyyaḍam ishṭam** = "You (resp.) like to do"

For the verb **rā** = "come", we have the following

PAST (-ā-): **nēnu vaččānu** [S-T-P: **vačč-ā-nu**] = "I came", **mīru vaččāru** [S-T-P: **vačč-ā-ru**] = "You (resp.) came"

FUTURE/HABITUAL (-tā-): **nēnu vastānu** [S-T-P: **vas-tā-nu**] = "I will come" / "I come", **mīru vastāru** [S-T-P: **vas-tā-ru**] = "You (resp.) will come" / "You (resp.) come"

PRESENT (-t-): **nēnu vastunnānu** [S-T-P: **vas-t-unnānu**] = "I am coming", **mīru vastunnāru** [S-T-P: **vas-t-unnāru**] = "You (resp.) are coming"

INFINITE (-aḍam): **nāku rāvaḍam ishṭam** = "I like to come", **mīku rāvaḍam ishṭam** = "You (resp.) like to come"

Post-positions

Adverbs

Adjectives

Conjunctions
