



# Revitalizing Tribal Linguistic Heritage: Preserving The Bhumij And Mundari Languages In Mayurbhanj

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## Abstract:

Language plays a vital role in shaping the cultural identity of communities. In the context of Mayurbhanj, a region known for its rich tribal heritage in Odisha, India, the preservation of tribal languages has become an urgent concern. This research paper investigates into the significance of language as an essential element of cultural identity and focuses on the preservation of Bhumij and Mundari languages as a crucial aspect of cultural heritage in Mayurbhanj. The paper highlights the unique linguistic diversity present in Mayurbhanj, with a particular emphasis on the endangered tribal languages spoken by various indigenous communities. Drawing on extensive research, the paper sheds light on the factors contributing to the endangerment of Bhumij and Mundari languages in Mayurbhanj. It discusses the influence of dominant languages, urbanization, globalization, and educational policies that promote non-tribal languages as mediums of instruction. The adverse impacts of language shift, language loss, and the consequent disconnection from cultural roots are examined in detail. Furthermore, the research paper explores the efforts and initiatives aimed at preserving Bhumij and Mundari languages in Mayurbhanj. It highlights the significance of language revitalization programs, community-led language preservation initiatives, and the role of education in promoting and sustaining tribal languages. The paper also discusses the importance of creating awareness among both tribal and non-tribal communities about the value of linguistic diversity and cultural heritage. The findings of this research underscore the urgent need to prioritize the preservation and revitalization of tribal languages in Mayurbhanj, especially the Bhumij and Mundari languages. It emphasizes the role of government agencies, educational institutions, community organizations, and individuals in supporting language preservation initiatives.

**Key Words:**Bhumij, Mundari, language, Mayurbhanj, mundaribani, Ol Onal

## 1 Introduction

Language plays a vital role in shaping our identities, serving as a powerful medium for communication, expression, and cultural preservation. For indigenous communities around the world, language holds a special significance as it serves as a key marker of their distinct cultural heritage and collective identity. In the rich and diverse tapestry of India's tribal communities, the preservation of tribal languages is of paramount importance to safeguard their cultural traditions, knowledge systems, and overall way of life.

Among India's 28 states, Orissa, which is socioeconomically backward and culturally sound, has the most tribal communities (62 tribes, including 13 primitive tribes)<sup>1</sup>, with a population of 9.59 million, accounting for 22.86% of the state's population and 9.17% of the country's total tribal population. Mayurbhanj is one of nine tribal districts in Orissa, and it is one of the 30 districts. According to the 2011 census, Mayurbhanj has 58.58 percent tribal population, compared to 22.85 percent in the state.<sup>2</sup>

Mayurbhanj is a landlocked district with a total geographical area of 10,418 square kilometres located on the state's northern border, with the district headquarters in Baripada. The district is located between latitudes 210.17 and 220.34 North and longitudes 850.40 and 870.11 East.<sup>3</sup> The district is flanked on the north by West Bengal's Midnapore district, Jharkhand's Singhbhum district, on the west by Keonjhar district, and on the east by Balasore district. Out of the 26 blocks, tribes are more concentrated in Jashipur, Khunta, Bijatala, Jamda, Tiring, and Thakurmunda, where the population ranges from 70 to 80 percent of the overall population. On a numerical basis, the principal tribes of Mayurbhanj are Santal, Kolha, Bathudi, Bhunij, Munda, Gond, Saunti, Hill Kharia, Mahali, and the smaller tribes are Birhor, Lodha, Kisan, Holva, and so on. The Santal are the major tribes in the district, and they are distributed and concentrated throughout Mayurbhanj. The district's primitive tribes, such as The Hill Kharia, Birhor, and Lodha, demand special note.

The census report of 1931 of Mayurbhanj follows the classification suggested by Sir Edward A. Gait in his "*Bengal, Bihar and Orissa in 1901*."<sup>4</sup> According to that the languages spoken in the ex-state were classified into the following five district groups:

- i) Indo-Aryan family
- ii) Munda family
- iii) Dravidian family
- iv) Language, foreign to India

<sup>1</sup> Ota, A. B., B. N. Mohanty, and S. C. Mohanty. "Particularly vulnerable tribal groups of Odisha." (2021).

<sup>2</sup> Mohanty, B. "Tribal population of Mayurbhanj." *Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 22.1 (2017): 57-60.

<sup>3</sup> Senapati, Nilamani, and Nabin Kumar Sahu. *Orissa District Gazetteers: Mayurbhanj*. Vol. 3. Superintendent, Orissa Government Press, 1967.

<sup>4</sup> Sahoo, Laxman Kumar. "Tribal Language Movement and Development Intervention in Mayurbhanj District of Odisha." *A Journal of Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes Research and Training Institute (SCSTRTI) Bhubaneswar Odisha, India* (2013): 92.

v) Gipsy language.

The district's mother tongues were listed as 23 in the 1951 census report, but 24 in 1961. Odisha is the tribal-dominated state with the most tribal communities (62), representing key linguistic groupings such as Dravidian, Austro-Asian, and Indo-Aryan. The Austric and Indo-Aryan linguistic groups predominate among Mayurbhanj's tribal inhabitants. Santal, Munda, Ho, Hill Kharia, Oraon, Mahali, Kol, and Bhumij are tribal communities that speak their own language.<sup>5</sup> The remaining tribal communities in the district speak Odia and a mix of languages. Three tribal clans in Mayurbhanj, including the Santal, Munda, and Ho, established their own script. Santali is a constitutionally recognised language.

This research article focuses on the preservation of Bhumij and Munda tribe languages as cultural heritage in Mayurbhanj. The paper will look at the issues that Bhumij's confront in their Mundari language in Mayurbhanj, the socio-cultural ramifications of language loss, and the current attempts and projects to preserve and revitalise these languages..

## 2 Objectives of the Study:

- ❖ To investigate the current status and challenges faced by the Bhumij and Mundari languages in Mayurbhanj.
- ❖ Understand the significance Bhumij and Mundari languages as cultural heritage.
- ❖ Propose strategies for their preservation and revitalization of Bhumij and Mundari languages.

## 3 Methods of the Study:

In order to conduct a comprehensive study on the "Preserving Bhumij & Mundari Languages: Revitalizing Tribal Linguistic Heritage in Mayurbhanj", the author utilized a well-structured methodology for collecting ethnohistorical data. This included conducting field studies, interviewing individuals, and gathering information from various sources, both primary and secondary. The author drew upon research papers from the State Library, State Archives, ST, SC Welfare Department to supplement the data collected during fieldwork and interviews. Internet sources regarding Bhumij and Mundari language also helped a lot.

<sup>5</sup> Behera, Amulya Kumar. "Primary education among tribal people of Mayurbhanj district of Odisha: An Evaluative Study." *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention* 4.2 (2015): 43-54.

## 4 Bhumij Tribe and their Language

### 4.1 Background

The Bhumij are a prominent Scheduled Tribe of Odisha, primarily situated in the region of Mayurbhanj. The name "Bhumij" refers to someone who is born from the soil.<sup>6</sup> Their initial home, according to oral tradition, was in Tamulia, Bihar. Munda, a father with four sons, resided nearby. As their descendants multiplied, they went in various directions, one of which came to Mayurbhanj. They are thought to be a subtribe of the Munda tribe. They speak a Munda dialect called 'Bhumij', which is their mother tongue. They are now multilingual and conversant in native languages such as Odia, Hindi, and Bengali.

### 4.2 Location

They are primarily found in the middle part of the Baripada subdivision, as well as Badasahi, Betnoti, Bangripasi, Rairangpur, and Karanjia. According to the 2011 census, the tribe's population is 17,3060 people, accounting for 11.70% of the entire tribal population. Munda is another name for this tribe. In some areas, they intermarry with Mundas and are referred to as Bhumij-Munda. "The Bhumij are nothing more than a branch of the Mundas, who have spread eastward and mingled with the Hindus, and then for the most part severed their connection with the parent tribe,"<sup>7</sup> Risley believed. It is clear that they are gradually adopting Oriya as their mother tongue. They take cooked meals from Brahmans and other upper castes, as well as water from Kurmis.

### 4.3 Language

Bhumij is an Austroasiatic language of the Munda subfamily,<sup>8</sup> related to Ho, Mundari, and Santali, and is principally spoken by the Bhumij peoples of Jharkhand, Odisha, and West Bengal. According to the 2011 census, only 27,506 out of 9,11,349 Bhumij people spoke Bhumij as their mother tongue, indicating that the majority of Bhumijas had moved to one of the regional prevalent languages. As a result, the language is considered critically endangered.

Bhumij speakers have traditionally inhabited in the Kherwarian region of modern-day Jharkhand, Orissa, and West Bengal.<sup>9</sup> While very few Bhumij people speak it today, it was far more common previously. Those who lived in Dhalbhum's east changed to Bengali and lost their local language, whilst those who lived around the Chota Nagpur Plateau retained their language. Since the 1940s, the number of speakers has gradually decreased.

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<sup>6</sup> Ota, A. B., Sarat Chandra Mohanty, and H. B. Barad. "Bhumij." (2020).

<sup>7</sup> Risley, Herbert Hope. *The tribes and castes of Bengal: Ethnographic glossary*. Vol. 1. Printed at the Bengal secretariat Press, 1892.

<sup>8</sup> Anderson, Gregory DS. *Introduction to the Munda languages*. Vol. 1. No. 10. London/New York: Routledge, 2008.

<sup>9</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bhumij\\_language](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bhumij_language)

## 4.4 Bhumij Speaker in India

### Historical Number of Bhumij Speaker

Census Year	Bhumij Speaker	+/- %
1941	108,230	
1951	101,938	-5.81%
1961	131,258	+28.76%
1971	51,651	-60.64%
1981	50,384	-2.45%
1991	45,302	-10.09%
2001	47,443	+4.73%
2011	27,506	-42.02%

(Source- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bhumij\\_language](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bhumij_language))

## 4.5 Development of Ol Onal Script

Bhumij was mostly an oral language until the Ol Guru Mahendra Nath Sardar developed the Ol Onal script between 1981 and 1992.<sup>10</sup> The Ol Onal is a Bhumij alphabetic writing script used by Bhumij peoples. Ol Guru Mahendra Nath Sardar invented the Ol Onal script between 1981 and 1992. In West Bengal, Jharkhand, Orissa, and Assam, the Ol Onal script is used to write the Bhumij language.

The Bhumij community had no written language, and knowledge was passed down verbally from generation to generation. Later, academics began to document the Bhumij language using Devanagari, Bengali, and Odia scripts. Bhumij, on the other hand, did not have their own script. His development of the Ol Onal script strengthened the tribal Bhumij community's cultural identity. He wrote a number of textbooks in the Ol Onal script. Bhumij Lipi and Bhumij Onal are other names for Ol Onal.

Adim Bhumij Samaj, an Odisha-based Bhumij community organisation, organised a contest in 1992 to design a new script for writing the Bhumij language.<sup>11</sup> Three distinct scripts were developed before the organisation authorised and adopted the Ol Onal script by Mahendra Nath Sardar of Mahadevdihi (born 1956) as the official script for the Bhumij language.

<sup>10</sup> <https://omniglot.com/writing/olonal.htm>

<sup>11</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bhumij\\_language](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bhumij_language)

## 4.6 Efforts to Develop Bhumij Language

The West Bengal Adibasi Bhumij Language Development Board operates 26 Bhumij schools in the state. Adim Bhumij Samaj (founded in 1981) operates nine Bhumij learning schools in Odisha.<sup>12</sup> Ayoan Akhra (founded in 1977-78) operates ten schools in Jharkhand. Adibashi Saudo Assam conducts workshops around Assam. The All India Bhumij Education, Social Cultural and Council, a national level council, organises Ol Onal teaching in schools and workshops in practically all Bhumij inhabited districts of Odisha, West Bengal, Assam, and Jharkhand. Shahid Sundar Nagar Singh Ol Onal Akhra, Shahid Raghunath Singh Ol Onal Akhra, Shahid Pratap Singh Bhumij Bhasha Bhakul, and others are sponsored by the Tata Tisco foundation.<sup>13</sup> In 1998, the first Bhumij-Ol Onal school started in Rouanshi, Mayurbhanj, Odisha. The state government operates certain Bhumij elementary schools in Odisha.

## 5 Munda and Mundari language

### 5.1 Background

Munda, another tribal clan in Mayurbhanj district, is descended from the Jharkhand state of Chhotanagpur. They moved from Chhotanagpur to the Odisha districts of Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, and Jajpur.<sup>14</sup> They belong to the Mundari language group. Mundari speakers were counted as 683 in the 1931 census. According to the 1951 census, the population was 20, 918, but by 1961, it had risen to 58, 383, according to Mayurbhanj district gazetteers. In the nineteenth century, European missionaries were the first to begin studying Munda(ri) languages. Mundari was composed in Nagari script. Father Hoffmann had compiled the 13-volume Encyclopaedia Mundarica in English (1930-1941).<sup>15</sup>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.unicode.org/L2/L2022/22151-ol-onal-script.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.unicode.org/L2/L2022/22151-ol-onal-script.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> Jana, Narayan Chandra, Anuradha Banerjee, and Prasanta Kumar Ghosh. *Sustainable Livelihoods of Tribal Communities in Odisha, India: The Case of Mayurbhanj*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2022.

<sup>15</sup> Sahoo, Laxman Kumar. "Tribal Language Movement and Development Intervention in Mayurbhanj District of Odisha." *A Journal of Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes Research and Training Institute (SCSTRTI) Bhubaneswar Odisha, India* (2013): 92.



## 5.2 Mundari Speakers in India

### Historical Number of Mundari Speaker in India

Census Year	Mundari Speaker	+/- %
1971	771,253	-----
1981	742,739	-3.70%
1991	861,378	+15.97%
2001	1,061,352	+23.22%
2011	1,128,228	+6.03%

(Source- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mundari\\_language](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mundari_language))

## 5.3 Development of Mundaribani Script

The Munda script "Mundaribani" was created by Rohidas Singh Nag of Salbani Village in the Mayurbhanj district.<sup>16</sup> Rohidas Singh Nag was born on May 5, 1934, in the hamlet of Salbani in the Odisha district of Mayurbhanj. In 1949, Rohidas Singh Nag, a class III student, devised Mundari script and used clay to write the alphabets on the school wall. Nag, a class VIII student in 1953, devised 35 alphabets of Mundari script. Nag also reduced Mundari script, and in 1980, a total of 27 alphabets were chosen for use.

## 5.4 Efforts to Develop Mundari Language

In 1980, Rohidas Singh Nag informed the then-Chief Minister of Odisha, Shri J.B. Pattnaik, about the invention of Mundari script and presented a memorandum to constitutionally recognise Munda language.<sup>17</sup> In 1999, Rohidas Singh Nag and others petitioned the then-President of India for constitutional recognition of the Munda language. Mundari Samaj Sawara Jamada (A Social Organisation of the Munda Community) has been demanding that the Munda language be included in the eighth schedule of the Indian Constitution, that it be broadcast on All India Radio, and that a Munda language department be established at North Odisha University, Baripada for higher education.

Several social organisations have honoured Rohidas Singh Nag. In 1996, he was honoured by the Academy of Tribal Dialects and Culture (A Research Institute of the S.T. and S.C. Development Department of the Government of Odisha) for his major contribution to tribal language and culture in Odisha in general, and Munda language and culture in particular. He was honoured in 2004 by Bharat Munda Samaj and again in

<sup>16</sup> Das, Mukteswar. "Culture of Mayurbhanj and Medinipur: A Comparative Study." *The Researchers' International Research Journal* 6.1 (2020): 1-15.

<sup>17</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rohidas\\_Singh\\_Nag](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rohidas_Singh_Nag)

2010 at Balangi Mahostava<sup>18</sup> in Baripada.

### 5.5 Some popular words in Mundari Oral Tradition

Sl. No	Words in Mundari Language	Meaning in Odia Language	Meaning in English Language
1	Johar	namaskar	Hello
2	Enga Uma	Maa	Mother
3	Apu Abba	Bapa	Father
4	haga	Bhai	Brother
5	Dada	Bada bhai	Elder Brother
6	Misi	Bhauni	Sister
7	Naanaa	Bada bhauni	Elder Sister
8	Kaka	Dada	Paternal Uncle
9	Mamu	Mamu	Maternal Uncle
10	Mami	Main	Maternal Aunt
11	Koda	Pua	Boy
12	Kudi	Jhia	Girl
13	Dhangra	Jubak	Young man
14	Dhangri	Jubati	Young woman
15	Men	Kahiba	Speak
16	Jyom	Khaiba	Eat
17	Nel	Dekhiba	See
18	Inj	Mun	I
19	Aam	Tume	You
20	Aaling	Aame	We
21	Sen	Chaliba	Walk
22	Dudup	Basiba	Sit
23	Aayom	Suniba	Listen
24	Maadi	Bhata	Rice
25	Naba	Nua	New

## 6 Language Challenges Among Them

The Bhumij and Mundari language, spoken by the Bhumij and Munda tribe respectively in Mayurbhanj and other regions, faces several challenges that pose a threat to its preservation and vitality. Some of the challenges include:

- ❖ **Language Shift:** One of the major challenges is the shift towards dominant languages like Odia, Bengali, or Hindi.<sup>19</sup> With increasing urbanization, globalization, and access to mainstream media, younger generations are often more inclined to adopt these dominant languages for communication, education, and employment purposes. This shift results in the gradual erosion of the Bhumij and Mundari language.

<sup>18</sup> Balangi Mahotsav is a vibrant cultural festival celebrated in Baripada, Mayurbhanj district

<sup>19</sup> Ishtiaq, Mohammad. *Language shifts among the scheduled tribes in India: A geographical study*. Vol. 13. Motilal Banarsidass Publ., 1999.



- ❖ **Limited Written Resources:** Bhumij and Mundari has limited written resources, including books, dictionaries, and educational materials. The lack of written materials makes it difficult for the language to be taught and learned in formal educational settings.<sup>20</sup> Without proper documentation and resources, the language's usage and transmission become more challenging.
- ❖ **Social Stigma:** In some cases, there might be a social stigma associated with speaking indigenous languages. Bhumij and Mundari speakers may face discrimination or ridicule, leading to a decrease in their willingness to use the language publicly. This can contribute to language shift and the loss of cultural identity.
- ❖ **Urbanization and Migration:** Urbanization and migration patterns can disrupt the traditional rural settings where the Bhumija and Munda tribe reside. As people move to urban areas in search of employment and better opportunities, they are exposed to dominant languages and cultures, which can lead to a decline in the use and transmission of the Bhumij and Mundari language.
- ❖ **Lack of Language Planning and Policies:** The lack of language planning and policies specific to the preservation and promotion of indigenous languages like Bhumij and Mundari can hinder their recognition and support. Without adequate language planning, resources, and policies in place, the language may continue to face neglect and underdevelopment.<sup>21</sup>

## 7 Recent Steps Taken

- ❖ Odisha, a state having a diverse linguistic situation, has adopted Multi Lingual Education (MLE) in principle, and tribal languages were chosen in 2006-07 based on educational necessity, societal demand, and the gap between home and school language.<sup>22</sup> Santali, Saora, Koya, Munda, Kui, Kuvi, Oram, Kishan, Bonda, and Juang are the languages.
- ❖ The state has responded positively to the aspirations of the tribal groups in Mayurbhanj district and adopted policies based on the Multi Lingual Education (MLE) idea. The government of Odisha implemented OLCHIKI in elementary and secondary schools, as well as in colleges, to bridge the language gap between tribal and contemporary culture.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Bauman, James J. *A Guide to Issues in Indian Language Retention*. Center for Applied Linguistics, 3520 Prospect Street, NW, Washington, DC 20007, 1980.

<sup>21</sup> Abbas, Furrakh, and Siti Jamilah Bidin. "A Critical Analysis of the Language Planning and Policy (LPP) in Pakistan and its Impact on Indigenous Languages of Pakistan." *Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics* 8.1 (2022): 85-96.

<sup>22</sup> Mohanty, Miss Amrutajyoti. "Multilingual Education: An Innovative Strategy to Achieve UEE in Odisha."

<sup>23</sup> Lotz, Barbara. "Promoting tribal languages in education: A case study of Santali in Orissa." *Journal of Social Sciences* 8.2 (2004): 129-142.

- ❖ Santal children receive education in their own script OLCHIKI through the Sarva Shikhya Abhiyan (SSA) project.<sup>24</sup> In the Mayurbhanj area, 100 schools used OLCHIKI under Multi Lingual Education (MLE) to educate Santal youngsters in 2007-08.
- ❖ In 2009-10, under the Sarva Shikhya Abhiyan (SSA) programme, ten elementary schools in the Mayurbhanj district adopted Ho language to provide education to Ho children through Multi-Lingual Education (MLE).<sup>25</sup>
- ❖ In response to the Munda language movement in Odisha, 30 primary schools in Mayurbhanj district embraced Munda language to deliver education to Munda children as part of the Multi Lingual Education (MLE) plan in 2007-08.
- ❖ In August 2018, the State Government proposed adding three significant tribal languages - Ho, Mundari, and Bhumij - to the Constitution's 8th Schedule.<sup>26</sup> In a letter to the Union Home Minister, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik stated that his government had taken many initiatives to recognise tribal languages.
- ❖ In the year 2022, BJD MP Dr. Sasmit Patra requested that the Ho, Mundari, and Bhumij languages be included in the Indian Constitution's 8th Schedule via a Special Mention notice in the Rajya Sabha.<sup>27</sup> He expressed this demand in Odia, which is dear to the hearts of millions of tribal brothers and sisters in Odisha who speak these languages.

## 8 Steps to Address the Challenges

To address the challenges faced by the Bhumij & Mundari languages, a multi-faceted approach is needed that encompasses various strategies and initiatives. Here is a detailed explanation of the proposed efforts:

- ❖ **Language Revitalization Programs:** Language revitalization programs are essential for the preservation and promotion of endangered languages.<sup>28</sup> These programs involve activities such as language classes, workshops, cultural events, and language documentation. They provide opportunities for community members to learn, practice, and pass on the Bhumij & Mundari languages to younger generations.
- ❖ **Digital Initiatives:** In the digital age, leveraging technology is crucial for language revitalization.<sup>29</sup> Digital

<sup>24</sup> Hembram, Singo, and Ratnakar Mohapatra. "Indian Tribal Educational System for the Santal Children of Mayurbhanj District of Odisha: A Psychosocial Analysis." *PSYCHOLOGY AND EDUCATION* 58.2 (2021): 940-952.

<sup>25</sup> Misra, Savvy Soumya, and Pooja Parvati. "Oxfam in Action: Promoting multilingual education in Odisha's Adivasi belt." (2015).

<sup>26</sup> Express News Service, *Inclusion of 'Ho' dialect in 8th Schedule sought*, The Indian Express, Published: 07th December 2018

<sup>27</sup> Pragativadi News Service, *BJD MP Sasmit Patra Demands Inclusion Of Odisha's 3 Tribal Languages In 8th Schedule Of Constitution*, The Pragativadi, Published: 22 July 2022

<sup>28</sup> Grenoble, Lenore A., and Lindsay J. Whaley. *Saving languages: An introduction to language revitalization*. Cambridge University Press, 2005.

<sup>29</sup> Bishop, Melissa. "Elders' Conversations: Perspectives on Leveraging Digital Technology in Language Revival." *The Open/Technology in Education, Society, and Scholarship Association Journal* 2.2 (2022): 1-13.

initiatives can include the creation of online resources such as websites, mobile applications, and social media platforms that provide language learning materials, dictionaries, and interactive language exercises. These digital resources can help reach a wider audience, including the younger generation who are more connected to technology.

- ❖ **Advocacy for Language Rights and Recognition:** Advocacy efforts are necessary to raise awareness about the importance of preserving the Bhumij and Mundari languages and to advocate for language rights and recognition. This involves working with policymakers, educational institutions, and cultural organizations to promote the inclusion of the Bhumij and Mundari language in educational curricula, government programs, and official language policies.
- ❖ **Capacity Building:** Capacity building programs can be organized to train community members, educators, and language advocates in language teaching methodologies, linguistic research, and documentation techniques.<sup>30</sup> This helps create a pool of skilled individuals who can actively contribute to language preservation efforts.
- ❖ **Collaboration with Educational Institutions:** Collaborating with educational institutions, both at the primary and tertiary levels, is crucial for integrating the Bhumij and Mundari languages into the formal education system. This can include the development of language curricula, teacher training programs, and the provision of resources and materials for language instruction.
- ❖ **Collaboration with Linguists and Researchers:** Collaboration with linguists and researchers specializing in endangered languages can provide valuable insights and expertise in language documentation, grammar analysis, and linguistic preservation strategies.<sup>31</sup> This collaboration can help develop comprehensive language preservation plans based on sound linguistic research.
- ❖ **Funding and Resource Mobilization:** Securing funding and mobilizing resources is crucial for implementing language revitalization programs effectively. This can be done through partnerships with funding agencies, government grants, corporate sponsorships, and community fundraising initiatives.
- ❖ **Collaboration with Media Outlets:** Collaborating with media outlets, such as radio stations, television channels, and newspapers, can help promote the Bhumij and Mundari languages through broadcasting programs, news articles, and interviews. This can contribute to the visibility and prestige of the language within the wider society.

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<sup>30</sup> Richards, Jack C., and Theodore S. Rodgers. *Approaches and methods in language teaching*. Cambridge university press, 2014.

<sup>31</sup> Hale, Ken. "Endangered languages: On endangered languages and the safeguarding of diversity." *language* 68.1 (1992): 1-42.

## 9 Conclusion

The preservation and revitalization of the Bhumij and Mundari languages are vital for safeguarding the tribal linguistic heritage in the Mayurbhanj region. The research has shed light on the significance of these languages as a crucial component of the cultural identity and heritage of the Bhumij and Mundari communities. The study has highlighted the challenges faced by these languages, including language shift, declining speaker populations, limited resources, and inadequate institutional support. Efforts should focus on implementing language revitalization programs that involve community engagement, intergenerational language transmission, and the creation of digital resources. Advocacy for language rights and recognition is crucial in garnering support and raising awareness about the importance of preserving these languages. Collaboration between linguistic experts, community members, educational institutions, and government agencies can contribute significantly to the revitalization efforts. By preserving the Bhumij and Mundari languages, we not only protect linguistic diversity but also contribute to the overall cultural richness and identity of the Mayurbhanj region.

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