

## TEACHING LEARNING AIDS AND MATERIAL FOR LOCAL TRIBAL WARLI LANGUAGE

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Shri Rajan Garud started his teaching career in August 2009 in a school in Khorichapada village, Maharashtra. The school taught children from classes 1 to 5. From a young age, Shri Rajan had been interested in acting. Coupled to that, he had a good command over languages and was well-versed with various dialects. In 2009, he joined the school in Palghar district, he was faced with a communication problem as he was not conversant with the local language.

The Palghar district is home to many talukas in the mountainous regions, most of which are occupied by the Warli tribes. Given his interest in learning new languages, it was not long before Shri Rajan could converse in the local language. The medium of teaching in the school was Marathi, however, most students, belonging to these tribes, were unable to follow the lessons. The second issue was the complete lack of teaching aids. Needless to say, absenteeism was rampant and students displayed poor performance. Shri Rajan made up his mind to rectify both the issues with the aim to improve the quality of education and students' engagement with the lessons.

As a first step, he began teaching students of class 1 keeping them interested with poems, stories, rhymes, alphabets in their local dialect



Language learning activity

while also giving attention to Marathi and bridging the gaps between the two. In about six months, the students were able to show good progress; and those who were prone to miss school now became more regular. Encouraged by his success, Shri Rajan went on to author several books for children in the Warli dialect.

STANDARD LANGUAGE	WARLI LANGUAGE	FORMAT
Grandma's story	वाङ्मनिचा डोंगर	Story
We also want mobile	आम्हांना हो पायज मोबाइल	Dialog
Std. 1st textbook standard language	इ.ली वारली भाषा पाठ्यपुस्तक	Course
How deep is the water?	पानी कती ओढा ?	Dramatization
Vocabulary (standard language)	शब्दसंग्रह ( वारली भाषा )	Vocabulary
Who will win	जखिल कोन ?	Comics
Alphabet	वारली बोलीभाषा वदणमाला (व्यंजन,स्वर)	Alphabet

The aims of these books were to:

1. Provide class 1 and 2 students to express themselves in the Warli dialect.
2. Read poems
3. Learn songs and poems
4. Teach Warli alphabet at the end of the first session. E.g a-anuna (sitaphal), a-r (python) to introduce the students in the alphabet.

Learning in their own alphabet helped to overcome the students' resistance to learning. Gradually, they gained confidence and were able to read, write and express themselves. Once they had gained confidence in reading and writing in the local dialect, Shri Rajan then slowly and

steadily transitioned them to the standard language and he met with similar success. This successful project was implemented for the 1st standard in the first 5 to 6 months. Alphabet reading phase took about 1 month for practice.

This initiative was first implemented in the school under the program “Adivasi Warli Bolibhasha Adhyayan Sahitya Nirmiti”. He gave the children the task of compiling the names of birds, flowers, fruits, vegetables, and other common words. The children developed their reading skills, and then started reading books in the standard language. Shri Garud has developed other material which he has circulated to other schools in pdf form. He also developed a Warli teacher guide for other teachers.

Now students have developed reading skills also because books are in warli language. Then they were reading books which has standard language with meaning in warli language. And slowly they were started reading book of standard language too. Every student is reading material and textbooks with the same interest as reading dialect literature. This activity has been carried out in 5-6 months and the children have started reading happily.

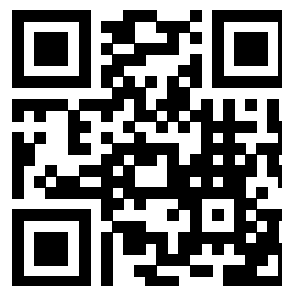
Thus many study and study material has been prepared from warli dialect. Warli dialect is mainly used in school teaching as well as giving examples, local events, contexts, experiences are used in teaching. He has also made some tutorial videos also in warli language. Some PDFs of Warli words and its meaning also circulated with other schools.

He did evaluation of students with different projects like giving activity of making list of birds,

animals, vegetables in warli language with the meaning in standard language. He observed that students were more excited to take this type of activities and their participation was encouraging to him. He observed the attendance pattern also and can clearly mark the increase in the attendance.

Most of the students in the school can now speak standard Marathi. They can talk to each other in Marathi language. They can also read stories and poems, and can perform drama in Marathi language. Most of the schools in Palghar district are using material developed by him. The Government of Maharashtra has given this experiment an innovation award. Shri Garud has received a number of awards including, the Guna Gaurav award from Palghar district Panchayat, and special merit award from the Tribal Development Minister, Maharashtra, the Avishkar Foundation Kolhapur award, and many others.

Scan QR-code to explore his work, including textbooks, in the blog [garudrajan.blogspot.com](http://garudrajan.blogspot.com)



#### QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

1. What activity can be done to explain to children the difference between the local language and the regional language?
2. What activities can be done to clarify children's speech?
3. What kind of project can be undertaken to explain the importance of language purification?

#### QUESTIONS FOR TRAINEES

1. What role does reading play in speech purity?
2. What kind of competition can be organized to learn and improve children's language fluency?
3. What contribution can parents make to their children's language?