

**RARE**



M.PHIL. THESIS IN LINGUISTICS

**MARGINALIZED COMMUNITY AND  
THE LANGUAGE OF THE VEDDAS**

**RENUKA RATHNAKANTHI ATTYGALLE**

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## ABSTRACT

This dissertation focuses on the Vedda language which is an indigenous language of Sri Lanka. In this presentation, emphasis is placed on the linguistic characteristics of the Vedda language, such as phonological, morphological variants and syntactic features.

In this, the research focuses attention on the works of earlier researchers and their interpretations of the Vedda language and how this information can be used to arrive at a feasible interpretation of the language.

According to the literature available, the roots of the Vedda language go to the pre-historic ages, before the Aryan emigration. Its parent language is of unknown origin. It is a primitive tribal language and is used for accomplishing the simple needs of the primitive people. Hence, the vocabulary is confined to a limited number of words.

As the civilization of the main stream of the society in the country underwent changes, and spread out, the Veddas borrowed words from the Sinhalese and the Tamil languages, while those who lived in certain areas still retained the identity of their language. However, it seems that their language undergoes a process of evolution.

Today, most of the Veddas use Sinhala or Tamil languages, according to their area of habitat. When these villages were exposed to the developmental projects of the country, the traditional lifestyle of the Veddas was threatened and had to be given up. Globalization also has had an impact on them.

The study hopes to use inferential data to show the correlation between the distribution of specific linguistic variants and the social characteristics of the informants who use the language. Further, the study also intends to keep its focus on the recorded cultural and language behaviour of the above language communities and compare them with the present day practices.

The study, also focuses on the future of this language and the community of users. In this, it focuses attention on the commitment of the elders to persevere their beliefs and practices for the sake of the community and the support given by national and international organisations.

Key Words: Vedda, Indigenous, Phonological, morphological, Syntactic