

To: UTC
From: Dev Dass Manandhar
Subject: Response to L2/12-200 “On the encoding of ‘Nepaalalipi’/‘Newar’ script”
Date: 21 July 2012

This document is a response to the UTC document L2/12-200 “On the encoding of ‘Nepaalalipi’/‘Newar’ script.”

Page 1, which directly follows this cover sheet, repeats the text of L2/12-200. The following pages discuss the comments made in L2/12-200.

The final page is a document from the Central Department of Nepalbhasa at Tribhuvan University in support of the proposal by Dev Dass Manandhar et al.

Ref:

L2/12-200

To: Dev Dass Manandhar, Samir Karmacharya, Bishnu Chitrakar and Anshuman Pandey

Source: Unicode Technical Committee

Subject: On the encoding of the “Nepaalalipi” / “Newar” script

Date: 11 May 2012

The UTC has reviewed documents L2/12-003 and L2/12-120 and wishes to commend the authors on the thorough analysis and clear presentation of issues regarding the encoding of characters for the “Nepaalalipi” / “Newar” script.

With regard to some of the technical issues with outstanding differences between these proposals, the UTC makes the following findings:

1. The virama model is the appropriate one for this script.
2. The encoding of long i and u and dependent matras -ai and -au as atomic, single characters, rather than as sequences, is preferable.

These approaches would be most consistent with the encoding model and implementation strategy seen for related Indic scripts.

The UTC notes that the encoding model suggested for this script does not place any requirements on modern users of the script to use all of the encoded characters. It also does not require any particular ordering of the characters. Such issues are properly the concerns of local communities, and can be addressed by appropriate subsetting and tailoring of the encoded character repertoire.

Quote -1 “ The encoding of long i and u as atomic, single characters, rather than as sequences, is preferable.”

With reference to the above Quote-1 sent to us by UTC, we cannot recognize the long i and long u as atomic, single characters. This decision was made to avoid encoding of 33 extra characters.

All the required 48 vowel characters are listed **below**:

Note: Mark “̣” represents sound nasalization mark.; Mark “:” represents long sound mark.

Prime Vowels - /a/, /aa/, /i/, /u/, /e/, and /o/

Long Vowels - /a:/, /aa:/, /ii/, /uu/, /e:/, and /o:/

Nasalized Vowels - /ã/, /aã/, /ĩ/, /ũ/, /ẽ/, and /õ/

Long Sound Nasalized Vowels - /ã:/, /aã:/, /ĩ:/, /ũ:/, /ẽ:/, and /õ:/

Prime Vowel Marks - /aa/, /i/, /u/, /e/ and /o/

Long Vowel marks - /aa:/, /ii/, /uu/, /e:/ and /o:/

Nasalized Vowel Marks - /aã/, /ĩ/, /ũ/, /ẽ/ and /õ/

Long Nasalized Vowel Marks - /aã:/, /ĩ:/, /ũ:/, /ẽ:/ and /õ:/

Diphthong Vowel Marks - /ai/ and /au/

Nasalized Diphthong Marks - /aĩ/ and /aĩ:/

Long Nasalized vowels - /aũ/ and /aũ:/

The UTC Quote-2 “These approaches would be most consistent with the encoding model and implementation strategy seen for related Indic scripts.”

The UTC Quote-2 refers to the need for consistency with the strategy employed for Indic scripts where limited long vowels and limited nasalized vowels and limited long nasalized vowels exist. The case for Nepaalalipi however, is different. In order to cover all vowels, including long vowels, nasalized vowels and long nasalized vowels, we are in favor of the sequential

presentation in UCS Table XX00 (L2/12-120) which has been endorsed by the Nepal Bhasha Academy and the Nepal Bhasa Department, Tribhuvan University.

Quote-3 “The UTC notes that the encoding model suggested for this script does not place any requirements on modern users of the script to use all of the encoded characters.”

With regards to UTC,Quote-3, our preferred encoding model is based on the functional needs of modern users as well as uses in historical documentations.

Regarding UTC Quote-4 “It also does not require any particular ordering of the characters. Such issues are properly the concerns of local communities, and can be addressed by appropriate subsetting and tailoring of the encoded character repertoire.”, we wish to point out that the Newa: community is the primary users of the scripts, so that we do not feel the need to deviate from the standard ordering of characters for local user. This view has been presented clearly in the characters map included in L2/12-120 proposal.

Modern Nepaalabhaasaa coalition order is:

- /a/, /a:/, /ā/, /ā:/,

-/aa/,/aa:/, /āā/,/āā:/,

- /i/, /ii/, /ī/, /ī:/

-/u/, /uu/, /ū/, /ū:/

-/e/, /e:/, /ē/, /ē:/

- /o/,/o:/, /ō/, /ō:/

Nepaalabhaasaa coalition order with a consonant /k/ is :

- /ka/, -/kai/,/ka:/, /kā/, /kā:/

-/Kaa/,/Kaa:/ Kāā/,/Kāā:/

- /ki/, -/kai/, /kii/, /kī/, /kī:/

-/ku/,/kau/, /kuu/,/kū/, /kuū/

Beside the comments received from UTC, we have not received any comments on the different views presented in L2/12-003 and L2/12-120.

1- Naming of script

Naming of script in L2/12-120 suggested the name NEPAALALIPI to avoid country name /NEPAL/ as well as the word /LIPI/. The single word is not a key word for either country or a script. Many names or nouns are formulated by the combination of two or more words in Nepaalabhaasaa . Where as the word NEWAR, as proposed in L2/12-003 is offensive to many native users. With reference to L2/12-120, the character /R/ is an allograph of character /L/ in the Nepaalabhaasaa language. Naming a script with an allograph character should be avoided. We had strongly advised to stick to the proposed name NEPAALALIPI for the proposed script.

2- The Breathy Characters

Proposal L2/12-120 includes breathy characters XX0D, XX13, XX1E, XX24, XX27 and XX29. They are the part of historical as well as modern Nepaalabhaasaa writing system. Words related to those characters are presented in the attached document extracted from the collation order as given in the following three Dictionaries :

1-A Dictionary of Clasical Newari(compiled from Manuscript Sources)-Cosā Pāsā(2000)

2-A Dictionary of Contemporary Newari by

Ulrike Kolver and Ishwarananda Shresthacarya (1994)

3-Dizionario Newari-Italiano- P. Gian Gualbrerto, Miss Cappuccino(1792)

3- The extra characters

Many characters presented in the proposal L2/12-003 are not a part of NEPAALALIPI script. These are avoided in L2/12-120.

We would like to mention that the Nepaalalipi manuscript archive probably is one of the biggest in the world. Researcher can find many minor evidences which may or may not be generic. The manuscript sometime is mixed with many different scripts like *Lixabi*, *Bhujimola*, *Nāgari*, *Ranjanā*, *Bengāli* etc, . The thousand years of history of Nepaalalipi script shows the evolution of characters in many different ways. Many calligraphers have improvised their knowledge in manuscripts.

The avoided characters are 11435 NEWAR SIGN VOCALIC RR, 11436 NEWAR SIGN VOCALIC L, 11437 NEWAR SIGN VOCALIC LL, 11440 NEWAR SIGN NUKTA, 11441 NEWAR SIGN AVAGRAHA, 1143E NEWAR SIGN ANUSVARA, 11442 NEWAR SIGN FINAL ANUSVARA, 11445 NEWAR SVASTI.

The characters 11435 NEWAR SIGN VOCALIC RR, 11436 NEWAR SIGN VOCALIC L, 11437 NEWAR SIGN VOCALIC LL are not found in historic documents as well as in modern uses.

Character like 11440 NEWAR SIGN NUKTA in L2/12-003 Fig 44 symbol was/is never a part of Sanskrit or modern Nepaalabhaasaa languages. How and why the mark is used is unknown. Which are the other characters where /NUKTA/ is applicable, not known. Physical evidence of the manuscript presented in L2/12-003 Fig 44 is studied by the expert Mr Syam Sundar Rajbanshi (Department of Archeology, Government of Nepal) have declared the age of manuscript is less than 100 years and the manuscript is mixed with Devanagari characters.

The character 1143E NEWAR SIGN ANUSVARA

This character represents two characters in Sanskrit and represents long sound nasalization in modern Nepaalabhaasaa. This character 1143E, long sound nasalization is presented by two characters therefore the encoding of character is avoided in L2/12-120. The character will be a part of NEPAALALIPI Font.

The characters 11442 NEWAR SIGN FINAL ANUSVARA

The character 11442 is probably derived named from other script not known to Nepalese context. Many calligrapher have experimented in their manuscripts with their own views on the character. An example is provided in L2/12-003 (Figures 37 and 38). In the Figure 37 , the character before 11442 contains 1143E. 1143E FINAL ANUSVAARA comes after 11442 ANUSVARA. This is like putting two nasalization marks together. This symbol is also presented as a punctuation mark. The two entirely different meanings for one character is confusing in many ways. It is better to avoid the confusing characters.

The character 1441 NEWAR SIGN AVAGRAHA

This character presented in L2/12-003 as 1441 NEWAR SIGN AVAGRAHA

is the result of experiments carried by calligrapher. This character as presented in L2/12-003 is not understood properly because of its occurrence after /e/ and /o/ vowels. It is assumed that the physical evidence of the character may represent another form of /a/.

There are hundreds of such foreign characters or symbols not understood properly in Nepaalalipi, as these differ from one calligrapher to other. Therefore to include unknown character and recognize them as equivalent to the characters as presented in UNICODE Devanagari does not make sense.

The character 11445 NEWAR SVASTI

The character 11445 NEWAR SVASTI does not belong to Nepaalalipi.

This character is used as a pair at the beginning and the end of a *Mantra*. This practice is found in Ranjana script but not in Nepaalalipi script.



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Date : January 29, 2012

To whom it may Concern

The Central Department of Nepalbhasha is one of the outstanding departments of Tribhuvan University. It is established to run the Post Graduate Degree of Nepalbhasha and to carry out research on Newar (one of the endigenous people of Nepal) and related field . The Department carries study and research on Newar Language, Scripts, literature and Culture. Among the different Newar Scripts, Nepalalipi (one of the Nepalese Scripts) is also one of the important Scripts subject that has to be taught at the post graduate level .

To enhance the study on Nepalalipi, last year the department had conducted two outstanding seminars in this subject. Mr. Dev Dass Manandhar, Mr. Samir Karmacharya and Mr. Bishnu Chitrakar had presented the papers on different aspects of Nepalalipi . Recognition of prime alphabets, vowel diacritical marks and the collation order of alphabets of Nepalalipi were discussed in the seminars. They had analysed and presented Nepalalipi in a very logical and clear format. The paper on Nepalalipi proposed to uncode Nepalalipi in UNICODE was presented by Mr. Dev Dass Manandhar.

I am pleased to learn that the outcomes of these presentations will be a basis for a project proposal to enter the Universal Character Set Code to be approved by UNICODE Consortium. I look forward to your kind attention to this matter.

Sincerely yours


Prof. Prem Shanti Tuladhar

Head

Central department Of Nepalbhasha