\Rightarrow Implementing Javanese \Leftarrow

Norbert Lindenberg Version 1, 2022-09-13

This document assists in implementing the Javanese script in fonts, rendering systems, keyboards, and other software by providing information that complements information in *The Unicode Standard*.

Contents

Reference materials	2
Script identification	2
Special characters	3
Conjunct forms	3
Encoding order of orthographic syllable components	6
Rendering	9
Keyboards	12
Line breaking	14
Acknowledgments	14
	Script identification Special characters Conjunct forms Encoding order of orthographic syllable components Rendering Keyboards Line breaking

© 2022 Lindenberg Software LLC. Norbert Lindenberg, Lindenberg Software LLC, and the Unicode Consortium make no expressed or implied warranty of any kind, and assume no liability for errors or omissions. No liability is assumed for incidental and consequential damages in connection with or arising out of the use of the information or programs contained in or accompanying this technical note. The Unicode <u>Terms of Use</u> apply.

1 Reference materials

The materials listed here should be consulted together with this document.

- The Unicode Consortium: *The Unicode Standard*, *Version 15.0.0*. The Unicode Consortium, 2022. Provides an introduction in section <u>17.4 Javanese</u>, the <u>code chart</u> <u>for the Javanese block</u>, and comprehensive <u>character data</u>.
- Richard Ishida: *Javanese*. GitHub, 2022. Comprehensive information on the script and its use for the Javanese language.
- Yayasan Pustaka Nusatama: ເມີນທານາະຫຼາຍເວິດເຫຼານໍາລາຍເກັດເຫຼົາມັນ Pedoman Penulisan Aksara Jawa. Yayasan Pustaka Nusatama, 2002. Guidelines to writing in Javanese script; endorsed by governments of Yogyakarta, Central Java, and East Java.
- Badan Standardisasi Nasional: *Fon (font) aksara nusantara*. SNI 9047:2021. Badan Standardisasi Nasional, 2021. Indonesian national standard on fonts for Javanese, Sundanese, and Balinese.
- Badan Standardisasi Nasional: *Tata letak papan tombol aksara nusantara*. SNI 9048:2021. Badan Standardisasi Nasional, 2021. Indonesian national standard on keyboards for Javanese, Sundanese, and Balinese.
- Microsoft Corporation: <u>Creating and supporting OpenType fonts for the Universal</u> <u>Shaping Engine</u>. Microsoft Corporation, 2020. Documents the OpenType shaping engine that supports Javanese.
- Aditya Bayu Perdana: <u>Rediscovering design in a supplanted script: The case of</u> <u>Javanese</u>. Typographic Design Center, 2022. History of type design for Javanese.
- Lindenberg Software LLC: <u>*Aksara Jawa*</u>. Lindenberg Software LLC, 2016-2022. Application providing a font and a keyboard for Javanese for iOS and iPadOS.

2 Script identification

The ISO 15924 script code for Javanese is "Java". The OpenType script tag is "java".

3 Special characters

The following characters are mentioned multiple times in this document:

- U+A9C0 JAVANESE PANGKON is the Javanese virama. This character is used both by itself, to represent the visible vowel killer, and as the first part of the character sequences used to encode the conjunct forms, or *pasangan*, of consonants, vocalic liquids, and independent vowels. This document uses PANGKON to denote the code point, and *pangkon* specifically for the visible vowel killer.
- U+A9BF C JAVANESE CONSONANT SIGN CAKRA is a medial consonant with complex rendering: In its normal form, it wraps around the bottom and left side of the base glyph or conjunct form it is attached to, and may form ligatures with other characters. However, in cases where this gets too complicated, a simplified form of *cakra* to the left of the base, (), can be used instead.

4 Conjunct forms

The following table shows the base consonants, vocalic liquids, and independent vowels (together the letters of the Javanese script) and their conjunct forms.

Base character	Base form	Conjunct form
Consonants		
ka	୳ଶ	ୢୄ
ka sasak (qa)	ណ្តា 5	ୢୄୢୄୢୄ
ka murda (kha)	ດຄ	് സ്
ga	m	្ត
ga murda (gha)	സ്ത	സ്
nga	ന	്ല
са	ເມ	ି ଜ

Base character	Base form	Conjunct form
ca murda (cha)	ശ്രദ	സ്ക
ja	۵ß	ွ
nya murda (jnya)	رم ۲	୍ତୁ
ja mahaprana (jha)	൬	ി
пуа	ሲኖጠ	<u></u> വി, സ്സ്സ്
tta	ດຊາ	္ထ
tta mahaprana (ttha)	ແກ	្ធ
dda	ഹ	္ရွိ
dda mahaprana (ddha)	ഡ	္လ
na murda (nna)	٩m	ណ៍
ta	ດຣາາ	୍ଥି
ta murda (tha)	ດູກ	୍ଷ
da	ശ	્ર
da mahaprana (dha)	ເພາ	្លូ
na	ແຄ	g
ра	ហ	പ
pa murda (pha)	۵.۵	هد
ba	ሲግነ	്, ് എ. ബ
ba murda (bha)	ন্থ	ु

Base character	Base form	Conjunct form
та	ദ്ര	్ర
уа	ឈ	ഡ്
ra	'n	្ត
ra agung	ന്ന	സ്സീ
la	സ	ୄ
wa	വ	ટ
sa murda (sha)	ମୟ	ୁ ଜ୍ଲ
sa mahaprana (ssa)	ଜ୍ୟ	ീ
sa	ດາ	াদ
ha	ന്ന	്ച
Vocalic liquids		
pa cerek (vocalic r)	ណ ১	ેં
nga lelet (vocalic l)	е р	្ជ្រ
nga lelet raswadi (vocalic ll)	رت ت	្ពា្ញី
Independent vowels		·
a	ເຊຍ	ୁ ଜ୍ଞା
i kawi	ດຕ ໂ	្តុំ
i	ሲግ S	្ត្
ii	ሲግ ኔ	្តំ
u	ല്പ	్రా

Base character	Base form	Conjunct form
е	۵	പ
ai	Š	്ഹം
0	SC	ාය

Conjunct forms are encoded by preceding the letter with PANGKON. The formation of conjunct forms can be prevented by inserting U+200C ZERO WIDTH NON-JOINER between PANGKON and the letter. The second conjunct forms of *nya* and *ba* are stylistic variants, which should be implemented as font features. The Indonesian standard SNI 9047:2021 shows these stylistic variants encoded as sequences of PANGKON, U+200D ZERO WIDTH JOINER, and consonant; this has the disadvantage, however, of breaking conjunct formation in fonts that do not specifically support the variant glyphs.

5 Encoding order of orthographic syllable components

Javanese, like other Brahmic scripts, has features where phonetic and visual order of characters within an <u>orthographic syllable</u> may differ: Dependent vowels and a medial consonant to the left of the base, and bindus and a final consonant above the base or a spacing conjunct form rather than above a right-side dependent vowel. For example, the components of the syllable q_{002} are generally pronounced in the order $q_0 n$, $q_{02} o$, $(r \rightarrow nor)$. The script's encoding uses a primarily phonetic ordering. In addition, the conjunct forms of letters are encoded as sequences of PANGKON and the respective letter; such sequences should generally not be broken up. Characters and conjunct forms within an orthographic syllable should be encoded in the relative order shown in the following table. The *encoding* column uses the syntax defined in the section <u>A.2 Extended BNF</u> of The Unicode Standard. The *count* column states how many characters of each class occur in real-life orthographic syllables.

Class	Characters	Encoding	Count
consonant, vocalic liquid, independent vowel, number, generic base	ய வீ வி எ இ உ யா சு ஸி வீ வே வீ வீ வீ வீ வீ வூ வ பீ வூ ய ப ப ப வீ வீ வ பி வூ ய ப ப ப ப ப பி வீ வி வ ப ப ப பி வி வ ப பி வி வ ப பி வி வ ப பி வி வ வி வ வ வ வ வ வ வ வ வ வ வ வ வ வ வ	[U+A984U+A9B2, U+A9D0U+A9D9, U+25CC]	1
nukta	ô	U+A9B3	0 to 1
conjunct form	၄ က္လ ဒု ကို ကို အို အို ကို ကို ကို ကို လို ကို ကို ကို အို လို ကို ကို ကို လို ကို ကို ကို အို လို ကို ကို ကို လို ကို ကို ကို အို လို ကို ကို ကို လို ကို ကို ကို လို ကို	U+A9C0 [U+A984U+A9B2]	0 to 2
nukta for conjunct form	ċ	U+A9B3	0 to 1
virama	്വ	U+A9C0	0 to 1
bottom-left or bottom medial consonant	ဌ္	[U+A9BF, U+A9BD]	0 to 1
bottom-right medial consonant	୍ର	U+A9BE	0 to 1
left-side depen- dent vowel	ရ္ ရိ	[U+A9BAU+A9BB]	0 to 1
top dependent vowel	ి ి ి	[U+A9B6U+A9B7, U+A9BC]	0 to 1

Class	Characters	Encoding	Count
bottom depen- dent vowel	ျ	[U+A9B8U+A9B9]	0 to 1
right-side depen- dent vowel	2 ు	[U+A9B4U+A9B5]	0 to 1
bindu	Ů Ŏ	[U+A980U+A981]	0 to 1
visarga	્ય	U+A983	0 to 1
final consonant	6	U+A982	0 to 1

If a *virama* (PANGKON) is used without an immediately following letter, it represents the visible vowel killer *pangkon*, which ends the orthographic syllable, and no character shown later in the table should follow. Instead, it may be followed by punctuation, by a line break, by U+200C ZERO WIDTH NON-JOINER to force an orthographic syllable break, or by space when using Western-style word separation.

A *nukta* should only be used after the base character or after a spacing conjunct form, not after a below-base conjunct form.

Some documents in the Kawi and Sanskrit languages use U+A982 \checkmark JAVANESE SIGN LAYAR, which normally is a final consonant, as a syllable-initial consonant, also known as *repha*. The syllable $\eta \cos 2$ is then pronounced in the order $\checkmark r$, $\cos n$, $\eta \ge o \Rightarrow rno$. This does not affect the encoded representation, which keeps treating LAYAR as a final consonant.

The encoding order shown above is the one resulting from the OpenType Universal Shaping Engine's default interpretation of the Unicode character data for Javanese characters, with existing <u>overrides</u> that move U+A9BF G JAVANESE CONSONANT SIGN CAKRA into the same group as U+A9BD JAVANESE CONSONANT SIGN KERET, and U+A9BE JAVANESE CONSONANT SIGN PENGKAL out of that group. The engine inserts dotted circles into character sequences with out-of-order marks, so that OpenType fonts only need to deal with correctly ordered characters. Fonts based on technologies other than OpenType, such as Apple Advanced Typography or Graphite, should themselves insert dotted circles into character sequences with out-of-order marks.

Keyboards and other text-generating software should ensure that typed or generated text conforms to this encoding order. Spelling checkers and other text-validating software should use this encoding order in their reference data.

Note that the encoding order shown above differs from that documented in the Unicode Standard up to version 14.0, which was both <u>incomplete and incorrect</u>. The Unicode Technical Committee has <u>removed the information on syllable structure from version 15.0 of the standard</u>.

6 Rendering

The following steps must be taken, in the order given, for each orthographic syllable to achieve orthographically correct rendering:

1. Combine each sequence of PANGKON and an immediately following letter to a conjunct form. However, where a conjunct form would collide with below-base parts of the base, or where too many conjunct forms are stacked, it may be acceptable to show *pangkon* and the letter separately, in which case the letter becomes a base itself.

2. Move all pre-base vowels (\mathfrak{q} and \mathfrak{q}) before the base.

```
nm + m \rightarrow mm ke
```

3. Convert any *cakra* () to its left-side variant () where necessary to prevent collisions with other glyphs.

ഹണ + ്ര + ്വ → ഹണ + ്ര + ്വ *-krya*

4. Move any *cakra* converted to its left-side variant before its base glyph (but after prebase vowels). ന്ന + ്ര + ്വ → സ്ത്രി *krya*

For OpenType fonts using the Universal Shaping Engine, step 1 needs to be implemented in the font; step 2 should be implemented by the shaping engine based on Unicode char-acter data; steps 3 and 4 are implemented by applying the "pref" feature to convert to the left-side form of *cakra*, which should cause the shaping engine to reorder the glyph.

Several additional steps may be taken to improve typography and to support stylistic preferences:

 Several glyphs take on connecting forms when below-base marks attach to them. The combinations may be implemented as ligatures – see the paragraph "Ligatures versus glyph positioning" below.

 $\underset{n}{n} + \underset{i}{\rightarrow} \underset{n}{n} -ku$ $\underset{n}{n} + \underset{i}{\rightarrow} \underset{n}{n} -quu$ $\underset{n}{n} + \underset{i}{\rightarrow} \underset{n}{n} -tre$ $\underset{n}{n} + \underset{i}{\rightarrow} \underset{n}{n} -tya$

• *Cakra* usually wraps around the bottom and left side of the base glyph or conjunct form it is attached to. When attached to a spacing conjunct form, it only wraps around that, not around the base glyph. *Cakra* also forms ligatures with an attached dependent vowel U+A9B8 JAVANESE VOWEL SIGN SUKU. When it gets too complicated, however, falling back to the left-side form of *cakra* is fine. Combinations of the left-side form of *cakra* with spacing conjunct forms are not known, so it is not clear whether in such a combination the *cakra* should be positioned to the left of the base glyph or to the left of the spacing conjunct form.

$$nem + \bigcirc \rightarrow (nem) kra$$

$$nem + \bigcirc \rightarrow (nem) nra$$

$$nem + \bigcirc + \bigcirc \rightarrow (nem) ndra$$

$$nem + \bigcirc + \bigcirc \rightarrow (nem) nru$$

$$nem + \bigcirc + \bigcirc + \bigcirc \rightarrow (nem) ndru$$

ണ + ്ല + ്ല → ഫ്ല്ല് *kkru* റെ + ാ + ്ര → റൈ *npra* റെ + ്ല + ്ല → ഫ്ല്ല് *ntrya*

• Glyphs that sit below below-base glyphs may be reduced in height, and below-base vowels may be attached at a higher-than-usual position, to reduce overall line height.

Above-base marks are commonly not stacked, but displayed side-by-side or even inside one another, which can be accomplished by creating combination glyphs. When determining the set of supported combinations, it is reasonable to assume that U+A980 ° JAVANESE SIGN PANYANGGA and U+A9B3 ° JAVANESE SIGN CECAK TELU do not co-occur, and that at most one of the vowels U+A9B6 ° JAVANESE VOWEL SIGN WULU, U+A9B7 ° JAVANESE VOWEL SIGN WULU MELIK, or U+A9BC ° JAVANESE VOWEL SIGN PEPET OCCURS. U+A981 ° JAVANESE SIGN CECAK and U+A982 ° JAVANESE SIGN LAYAR only co-occur when *layar* is used as *repha* in Kawi or Sanskrit.

ி + ் → ் -ĕr ி + ் → ீ -ĕng ் + ் → ீ (nukta)-i டை + ு + ் + ்ு + ் → டிறீ nfri

• Above-base marks are positioned above base glyphs or right-side conjunct forms, not above right-side vowels. In OpenType, this means that right-side vowels must be treated as marks, so that they can be ignored when positioning the above-base marks. Because of a compatibility feature in the Universal Shaping Engine, this causes their width to be set to 0, so that it must be added back later using the "dist" feature.

လ္ဟ + ₂ + ံ → တ္ဘံ₂ om က + ရ + ₂ + ဴ → ရက်ၗ₂ nor က + ံ + ရ + ₂ + ဴ → ရက်ၗ₂ for

• Fonts may enable the selection of stylistic glyph variants via features such as <u>stylistic</u> <u>sets</u>.

• Orthographic syllables often need to be spaced apart to avoid collisions between below-base glyphs.

Ligatures versus glyph positioning. The Javanese script has numerous glyphs that may, depending on the design of a typeface, connect to each other. For example, the conjunct form \bigcirc *wa* may connect to the right-most stems of many base consonants, as in \bigotimes *kwa*. If followed by a vowel \bigcirc *u*, it may also connect to that: \bigotimes *kwu*. For best rendering results, all such combinations of connecting glyphs would be implemented as ligatures. However, these combinations can easily number in the hundreds, possibly over a thousand, and substantially increase the size of a font. The alternative is to not include such ligatures, or only the most commonly used ones, and instead rely on positioning the connecting glyphs appropriately. This may however result in slight offsets in connecting lines, as renderers usually first rasterize the glyphs separately, then position them relative to each other, and both steps involve rounding of coordinates. Font developers should consider the trade-off carefully.

7 Keyboards

Key issues in the development of keyboards include which characters to support, how to arrange them on a physical keyboard or on screen, how to let the user interact with the keyboard, whether and how to support predictive input, and how to ensure the correct encoding order of orthographic syllable components. This section discusses some of these issues, comparing the Indonesian standard SNI 9048:2021, which covers physical and

virtual (on-screen) keyboards for Javanese as well as for Sundanese and Balinese, and the (on-screen only) keyboard in the Aksara Jawa app of Lindenberg Software.

Supported characters. When selecting characters to support, a common practice is to select only the characters needed for a given language, not all characters in a script. The modern Javanese language, for example, requires only 20 of the 36 consonants encoded in Unicode. On the other hand, a language-based approach requires identifying the character set used for each language (there does not seem to be much information available on Madurese or Sasak) and then creating separate keyboards for each. As the currently encoded Javanese character set is not that large, both SNI 9048 and the app's keyboard provide the complete character set.

One major difference between SNI 9048 and the app's keyboard is how they support conjunct forms. SNI 9048 does not specify dedicated keys for them, so users have to understand that they have to type first PANGKON, then the letter whose conjunct form they need. Experience with the Aksara Bali app of Lindenberg Software, which has the same limitation, has shown that a fair number of users do not understand this, and complaints about the "lack of support" for conjunct forms was the primary cause for customer care issues as well as negative reviews for this app. The Aksara Jawa app therefore provides separate layers with conjunct forms, one of which is shown below. This solution has proven much easier to understand.



Keyboard layout. SNI 9048 specifies both physical and virtual keyboard layouts. Both are similar and follow the English/Indonesian layout for physical keyboards, with two layers of five rows. For the physical keyboards, this may take advantage of muscle memory. The Aksara Jawa app, on the other hand, takes advantage of on-screen keyboards's ability to show the keys of all layers, and uses three layers for base characters and two for conjunct forms, each with four rows to better fit on phone screens.

Encoding order of orthographic syllable components. SNI 9048 does not discuss the encoding order of orthographic syllable components. This likely means that correct ordering is left up to users, who will have to understand the encoding order and edit text until it is free of dotted circles. The keyboard of the Aksara Jawa app relieves them of this by automatically reordering characters within an orthographic syllable. This is possible because the keyboard API on iOS lets keyboards read and edit the text surrounding the current insertion point. The input method APIs on Android, macOS, and Windows provide similar capabilities. Smart keyboards should take advantage of them to help users avoid incorrect text and dotted circles.

8 Line breaking

Lines of Javanese text can be broken at any orthographic syllable boundary. The Unicode Line Breaking Algorithm and implementations based on it, such as the Internationalization Classes for Unicode (ICU) library, do not yet provide this style of line breaking. Instead, two errors commonly occur: Either lines are broken only at punctuation, resulting in text overflowing the space available to it, or lines are broken at Unicode grapheme cluster boundaries, resulting in broken conjunct forms, as PANGKON is treated as the end of a grapheme cluster.

A <u>proposal to correct the Unicode Line Breaking Algorithm</u> has been submitted to the Unicode Technical Committee, which has <u>requested</u> that this proposal be <u>implemented in</u> <u>ICU</u>. Owners of other implementations should update them based on the proposal.

9 Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Aditya Bayu Perdana, who explained many details of Javanese typography to me and who designed the font used in this document (and in the Aksara Jawa app). I also thank Bayu (again), Evelyn Teo, Fadhl Haqq, Liang Hai, Marc Durdin, Martin Hosken, Muthu Nedumaran, and Simon Cozens for feedback on drafts of this document.

