

Representation of Bodo, Dogri and Maithili languages in Unicode Standard

Bodo, Dogri and Maithili languages are also written in Devanagari script. These languages are using Latin Apostrophe (U+02BC) to denote special tone mark. This tone maker is known as Gojau Kamaa (गोजौ कमा) in Bodo, Sur Chinha (सुर-चिन्हा) in Dogri and Bikari Kaamaa (बिकारी कामा) in Maithili. Hence following annotations should be added to the Latin Apostrophe (U+02BC), to specify the usage of this character in these languages.

02BC → MODIFIER LETTER APOSTROPHE

- Gojau Kamaa in Bodo used as Tone Marker
- Sur Chinha in Dogri used as Tone Marker
- Bikari Kaamaa in Maithili used as Tone Marker

Dogri and Maithili languages also uses the DEVANAGARI SIGN AVAGRAHA (U+093D) to denote the extra long vowels. In Bodo, at present, Devanagari ओ (U+0913) and ो (U+094B) are used to represent औ vowel and ो (औ vowel sign). But the tone is completely different. The tone of “ओ” does not represent the tone of “औ” therefore Bodo Sahitya Sabha has decided to use “औ” (U+0912) in place of “ओ” (U+0913) gradually from the beginning.

The following text should be added in the Devanagari write-up of the Unicode Standard (Chapter 9) to describe the special feature of these languages and usage of this character in these languages.

BODO

1. ओ – (U+0912) = ो – (U+094A) (Based on ISCII 1988) is used to represent extended pronunciation of Devanagari vowel sign short – ओ. At present, Devanagari script ओ = ो is used in Bodo to represent ओ = ो. But the tone is completely different. The tone of “ओ” cannot represent the tone of “ओ”. So Bodo Sahitya Sabha has decided to use “ओ” in place of “ओ” gradually from the Beginners.

Some examples – गोमो (गोमो) = yellow, गोसो (गोसो) = Mind, बोलो (बोलो) = Strength, सोलो (सोलो) = Skill, सोलोँथाइ (सोलोँथाइ) = Education.

2. Latin apostrophe – “ ’ ” – (U+02BC): Though it is a punctuation mark, in Bodo language, it is used as tone marker of Devanagari vowel sign short ‘O’.

The Latin apostrophe mark is placed above the “Sirorekha”. Though it is a punctuation mark, it is used as tone marker to signify the tone of Devanagari ओ . On the other hand, though the tone of Halant (U+094D) is found in Bodo Language, it has been avoided after use of Latin apostrophe. In Bodo, Latin Apostrophe is called “गोजौ कमा”. Example - खर’ = head, आख’ब = Groin, बारग’ = to escape, फल’ = a fish trap like basket, बस’ = to tear by pulling, दख’ना = the main Bodo woman dress.

DOGRI

In **Dogri**, Latin Apostrophe is used as a ‘ ’ ’ tone-marker (सुर- चि’न्न). Tone is a major supra-segmental feature, which widely appears in Dogri phonology. There are many levels of tone but three of them stand in contrastive distribution. These are: Level tone, Low-rising tone and High-falling tone.

In Dogri orthography ‘ ’ ’ is used to indicate high-falling tone after short vowels, these are: ə (अ), I (इ) and U (उ). For example - khə’llə (ख’ल्ल) “down”, ku’nə (कु’न) “who”, and ti’ləkəna (ति’लकना) “to slip”.

After long vowels (a, i, u, e, ε, o etc.) ‘h’ (halant ह्) is used to indicate the said pronunciation. For example - bār (बाहर) “out side”, gíta (गीह्टा) “pebble”, chúna (छूहना) “to touch”, kéra (केहरा) “single”, nér (नेहर) “canal” and mór (मोहर) “stamp”, khóra (खौहरा) “rough”.

‘S’ sign of extra-length (प्लुत- चि’न्न)

Occurrence of extra-long vowels plays an important role in word-final position by creating contrast of meaning between long vowels and extra long vowels. To indicate this extra-length, sign of ‘S’ is used after these vowels. For example: tala (तला) “sole”, tala: (तलाऽ) “pond”, bi (बी) “also”, bi: (बीऽ) “seed”, lε (लै) “get”, lε: (लैऽ), “rhyme”, le (ले) “carry”, le: (लेऽ) “scrap of plaster”, bhəro (भरो) “fill”, bhəro: (भरोऽ) “get filled”, kũ: (कूंऽ) “curvedness of Cot’s frame”

MAITHILI

Maithili also uses Latin Apostrophe to denote prolonged pronunciation of short "अ" as per examples given below:

कहाँ जा रहे हो - कत' जा रहल छें

काम हो गया । - काज भ' गेल

Latin Apostrophe is used to denote truncation of words as per example given below:

कत' पड़ा' गेल'? = कतए पड़ाए गेलह ("where did you go away?")

The symbol 'ऽ' is called as 'bikari' in Maithili. The Latin Apostrophe is called 'bikaari kama'. This symbol appears mostly in the standard Maithili and in the written form of the dialects spoken in and around Darbhanga and Madhubani. Apart from its phonetic correlate (as Mentioned above,) which corresponds to a lengthened (ॐ), it also marks ellipsis. Alternates of कत' is कतय (dialectally, in Saharsa-Purnea variety, it appears in pronunciation as कतै), and the 'bikaari kama' marks the ellipsis, i.e. alternative deletion of 'य ' here. Similar arguments could be put up for पड़ा' which is also uttered as पड़ाय and गेल' which has clearly a written alternant: गेलह ।

The 'bikaari kama', is mostly employed in the pronominal, adverbial and verbal forms, and never within or between nominal and adjectives, a few general places of occurrence are listed here:

- (i) In personal pronouns, especially in the older and medieval texts, eg. तो'र for तोहर 'your' (However, by that logic, one can't use it in the form for the first person मोर ~ हमर 'Mine, my');
- (ii) In directive and interrogative pronouns, even to this day, e.g. एतऽ ~ एत' ('here'), कतऽ ~ कत ('where'), ततऽ ~ तत rarely though ('there'), etc.
- (iii) In bi-verbal combinations, either in compound verbs (as in Hindi मार डाला, literally 'kill+throw', but actually kill + perf aspect, which is why they are also called the aspectual verbs) such as बहा' देलियन्हि 'Have submersed / emersed', ल' लेलन्हु ' (I) have taken' (literally: 'take + take' here), etc., as well as in serial verbs or verbal compounds where two action appear sequentially, देखा' आबै छी ' (I) am

- coming after showing him', पड़ा' अयलाह '(He) having run away, arrived / came', etc. Even here bikaari kama need not occur with polar verbs ending with short-i or half-short-i in the compound verb situations, e.g. देखि लेलयन्हि '(I) have seen (him)' or देखि आबै छी '(I) am coming after seeing him', etc.
- (iv) Maithili has a whole lot of denominative verbs, where a noun (or an adjective) is picked up and converted into a verb, where with the verbalizer / Marker, the bikaari kama is used e.g., from गोर or गोरा 'fair-complexioned' we get गोरा' जायब 'to become fair-complexioned', from झोर (liquid gravy) or मोट (fat), one derives verb roots like झोरायब 'to make liquidy / with gravy' or मोटायब 'to put on weight / fatten', which when conjugated, the bikaari kama shows up.
- (v) The new vocalic sound [ɔ ~ ɔ:] as a parallel to [æ] appeared in Maithili, which at times, is marked by 'ँ' even in stand alone uses of this expression.