

Comment on L2/10-406: Grantha Prepausal Ligated Virama (U+1134F)

I am reading Dr. T. Ganesan's document, L2/10-406. The decision of the South Asia Committee to use a code point (U+1134F) addresses all the issues on the two Viramas of Grantha script.

(a) Sri. R. Krishnamurthi Sastri (L2/09-372) has stated the existence of TWO viramas: "In the Grantha script, there are **two** ways of writing consonant sounds that are not followed by a vowel."

This aspect of Grantha can be seen in other books that teach Grantha script to students. These TWO viramas only (not 3 or 4 viramas) need individual representation in Unicode code chart. There are possibly many ways to encode them in Unicode, for example, using Joiners (as was the case in Malayalam, & subsequently replaced atomically) or by variation selectors etc.,

(b) After considering all the issues of representing how best to represent the two Viramas for over a year, UTC subcommittee on South Asia has concluded with the decision to encode the second virama of Grantha script with a code point. South Asia Committee wrote in L2/10-299:

"We note that if this recommendation is taken for the Grantha encoding, Grantha would have two viramas encoded -- a situation which is not unprecedented. There are other instances in the Unicode Standard in which because of presentation issues for a Brahmi based script, both a virama and a killer (or two types of viramas) have been encoded."

A close parallel is using digits 2, 3, 4 as superscripts and/or subscripts as exact in the Tamil script as equivalents of the Grantha letters with Grantha glyph shapes.

(c) By having Canonical Decomposition of the second virama of Grantha script with the standard virama, they can be treated as equivalents. There were actually two teams in the related Malayalam Chillu issue, the Rachana team always maintained that there is no real semantic difference, and these Chillus of Malayalam should be decomposed also. It will be good to implement the UTC South Asia Committee recommendation - Canonical decomposition for the second Virama code point with standard Virama in Grantha script encoding.

(d) For Dravidian texts and transliteration, the second Virama code point will be very useful in the Grantha script.

(e) Character Name for the Virama at U+1134F: There are statements s from Professors of Sanskrit and Linguistics, L2/10-424 (Ulrike Niklas, Koeln, Germany) and L2/10-414 (Kris Nachimuthu, JNU, Delhi) recommending the character name, GRANTHA SIGN PREPAUSAL LIGATED VIRAMA for U+1134F that will be useful and follows the recommendations of the Character name in published Grantha script books.

Thanks,
N. Ganesan