

THE KODPA WRITING SYSTEM

पीहोआखो चोएगु

1. Background:

The aim of this paper is the description of the writing system in the Kodku Pahari Language (Kodpa or Pahari). The phrase *writing system* demands a vague area of description. However, this paper delimits itself within the writing system of consonants and vowels of the language.

KODPA is an undefined and unwritten language. The documentation of the language is under progress. The language is much more proximal to classical Newari (CN) of post 16th century. Newari, natively Nepalbhasha (NB) has already adopted and modified Devanagari that means language is moving smoothly with the adaptation of the script. Based on the experiment of NB, KODPA being similar in phonology, morphology with CN can adopt Devanagari. This paper is prepared assuming Devanagari is the basic script for the language.

1.1 Introduction

Pahari is the language spoken in the hills of central Nepal. The name of the language literally means 'hill language'. It is also known as 'Pahi' or 'Padhi.'

Pahari is very closely related to Newari, so closely that it can properly describe as a sub dialect of that form of speech (Grierson; 1909: 227).

1.1.1 Distribution of the speakers

The Paharis are scattering over the 110 VDCs of forty Districts across the eight zones of five regional developments in the country.

1.1.2 The Literacy Rate

The literacy rate of Badikhel VDC, in which Kodku hamlet belongs is 2938 (91.47%), male 1508 (46.95%), female 1430 (44.52%). Among them 987 (30.73%), Male 327(10.18%), Female 660 (20.55%) falls in *Can not read and write* category. 186 (05.79%), Male 39(01.21%), Female 147(04.58%) falls in *Can read only* category. In addition, 1745 (54.33%), Male 1143 (33.59%), Female 622 (19.36%) falls in *Can read and write* category (CBS 2004). The national literacy rate of Pahari ethnicity is 29.93 % (9,171) (CBS: 2003:132).

1.1.3 Nomenclature of the Language

The scholars since the early age of research using the name PAHARI / BADIKHEL PAHARI (Grierson (1909)), Shafer (1955), Voeglin & Voeglin (1973), Shakya (1992), Shrestha (2002).The native speakers prefer to introduce them as a Kodku Pahari (*kukudyakari* 'the inhabitants of Kodku'). Besides this, the Newars of neighboring villagers addressed them Kodku PAHI: since time immemorial. The main area of Paharis' habitation is along the rivulet of KODKU, the only rivulet near the Godavari, which flows from the south to the North in Nepal. Considering the innate feeling of the native speakers, the established name and revering the native aspiration the language is named as KODKU PAHARI (KODPA)

1.1.4 Origin of the Pahari

About the origin of the Paharis, there is a prevailing mythology; the story goes as follows: A man was serving as an attendant in the kitchen in royal palace. One day he was cooking the dishes of meat. It tasted so well that he could not control himself and he tested the dishes. Now he realized somebody is coming near. So he hurriedly rubs his hand in his own cloth. The comer was the king. The king saw the attendant in a dirty robe. The king exiled him addressing him as 'fohari' (dirty man). The man settled in the hill area of the country. In course of the time, they were in a large numbers and they began to address as Pahari (hill men).

The story here is the only prevailing story. For a researcher s/he should keenly examine the facts whether the available data is correct. In the case of KODPA, no previous work is

available to predict the origin of the speakers. That is why as there is a famous proverb *a drowning man will catch at a straw* the researcher should rely on the words like Pi:<Pahari< Pura <Pari, that is more or less related to their socio-economic life.

Considering the traditional occupation of the Paharis, i.e. bamboo work may be the entry point to know about the origin of the Pahari people. Pura is the word for bamboo, Pari for stomach and pi: for Paharis. There might be special relation between Pura, Pari, and Pahari. Superficially, the liveliness of the Paharis is based on bamboo. We should rely on this hypothesis until any further comprehensive study.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

-) How many phonemes are there?
-) How contents are organized?
-) At existing condition can they be facilitated with Devanagari?

1.3 Objectives

The objectives of this paper are:

-) To determine phonemes.
-) To evaluate the existing writing system of Pahari language.
-) To suggest an appropriate writing system of Pahari language.

1.4 Review of Literature

Grierson (1909), Mali (1978, 1982), Shakya (1991) and Shrestha (1999) have studied about the language. None of them depicted about the writing system of the language.

Pahari (2002) produces an inventory of Pahari language. He has depicted Sanskrit palatal sounds like Ta[ट], T^ha[ठ], Da[ड], and D^ha[ढ]. During the field visit, the researcher found the speakers speak alveolar sound with labialization creates listener confusion between palatal and Apico - Alveolar sound.

1.5 Justification

The language of oral tradition, whose speakers are highly shifting [(74%) CBS: 2003] their language needs a preservation and maintenance. That is why the study is necessary.

1.6 Methodology

1.6.1 Source of Data

Fieldwork is the base for the data. The interview obtaining through the speaker is the base of the study.

1.6.2 Data Processing

For the systematic organization, the data collected through different sources Library materials are used.

1.6.3 Compiling

Though the system adopted the Devanagari script, aspirated nasal sounds have been represented through the modified additional letters. Like- इह for ih , न्ह for nh , हय for yh , ह for r , ल for l , व for v .

2. Phonology:

Based on the available data, following phonemes can be attested for the writing purpose of the language. The trill sounds r [], and r | [ह], since they are found only in the borrowed or morphophonemically changed words and the approximants $[\text{w}^{\text{h}}]$ and $[\text{y}^{\text{h}}]$ are totally replaced by v | [व] and y [य] clusters respectively, are not included in the total count of the consonants of the language.

KODPA however has 28 consonants and 6 vowels with length and nasal contrasts.

2.1 Consonants:

Place	Manner	Bilabial		Apico-alveolar		Palatal		Velar		Glottal	
		vl	vd	vl	vd	vl	vd	vl	vd	vl	vd
Plosive	-asp	p	b	t	d			k	g		
	+asp	p ^h	b ^h	t ^h	d ^h			k ^h	g ^h		
Affricative	-asp			c	j						
	+asp			c ^h	j ^h						
Nasal	-asp		m		n						
	+asp		m ^h		n ^h				h		
Fricative				S							h
Trill	-asp				*r						
	+asp				*r						
Lateral	-asp				l						
	+asp				l						
Approximant	-asp		w				y				
	+asp		w ^h				y				

+replaced by h^v & h^y clusters

*found only in borrowed & morphophonemically changed word.

2.1.1 Plosives: There are twelve plosive sounds.

Labial:	/p/	pa	'ax'
	/p ^h /	p ^h a	'step'
	/b/	ba:	'easy to cut'(log)
	/b ^h /	b ^h a:	'rate'
Apico-alveolar:	/t/	tu:	'mustard'
	/t ^h /	t ^h u:	'blow pipe'
	/d/	du:	'lowland'
	/d ^h /	d ^h u	'dust'
Velar:	/k/	ki:	'insect'
	/k ^h /	k ^h i:	'ground'
	/g/	ga:	'litter' bhakharo
	/g ^h /	g ^h a:	'wound'

2.1.2 Affricate: There are four affricates.

/c/	ca	'soil'
/c ^h /	c ^h a	'you'
/j/	ja	'meal'
/j ^h /	j ^h a	'grass'

2.1.3 Nasal: There are six nasals.

/m/	ma	'mother'
/m ^h /	m ^h a	'plain'
/n/	nu	'my'
/n ^h /	n ^h u	'press'
/ /	o	'fish/ five'
/ /	:	'before'

2.1.4 Fricatives: There are two fricatives.

/s/	sa	'cow'
/h/	ha	'steam'

2.1.5 Laterals: There are two laterals.

/l/	la	'hand'
/l /	l a	'talk/bury'

2.1.6 Approximants: There are two approximants.

/w/	wa	'teeth'
/ɛ /	ɛ a	'hole'
/y/	ya	'paddy'
/ə /	ə ɜ	'do'

2.2 Vowels

	<i>Front</i>	<i>Centre</i>	<i>Back</i>
<i>Lip</i>	-round	-round	+Round
<i>High</i>	i		u
<i>Mid</i>	e		o
<i>Low</i>		a	

/i/	i	'light'
/u/	u	'this'
/e/	me	'tongue'
/ /	a	'wall'
/o/	obu	'okhal' pastel
/a/	aca	'knife'

2.2.1 Prosodic features

There are two basic prosodic features that contrast are nasal [~] and length [:].

/i/

/i/	k ^h i	'copula'
/i:/	k ^h i:	'barren'
//	k ^h	'spread'
/: /	k ^h :	'madal(N)'

/u/

/u/	ku	'length of 18 inches'
/u:/	ku:	'spade/ kodali(N)'
//	k	'husband'
/: /	k :	'pitcher/ ghyampo (N)'

/e/

/e/	g ^h e	'butter'
/e:/	ke	'run (imp)'
//	k	'curry / tarkari (N)'
/: /	p :	'insert into'

//

//	k ^h	'Also'
/: /	t :	'spade'
/ - /	k ^h -	'thing'
/ - /	g -	'cock'

/o/

/o/	p ^h o	'soak'
/o:/	to	'man(arc.)'
/õ/	p ^h õ	'Pillow'
/õ:/	tõ:	'stolen'

/a/

/a/	ga	'shawl'
/a:/	da:	'fat'
/ã/	gã	'dry'
/ã:/	dã:	'money'

2.3 Writing System

2.3.1 Orthography

Devanagari is syllabic script. Each vowel has two representations: an independent grapheme at the beginning of a word and a diacritic of the consonant. It combines to form a syllable when it occurs elsewhere.

Devanagari writing heads rightwards in a horizontal axis that underlies the principles underlying the use of vowel symbols are crucial for reading them. Some vowel symbols for example, u and are used at the bottom; some are indicated by adding a vertical stroke to the right of the principal character, as in or i (short & long) or o yet others are symbolized by a kind of flag stick in place of the horizontal line at the top of the character.

In the case of pure vowels both short and long ones, the strokes are unique and they have each an identity of their own. Vowel contrasts such as nasalization of a long vowel is indicated by a little moon-shaped symbol placed at the top; the nasalization of a long vowel, a little moon shaped symbol at the top with colon mark. True length of a and is indicated by a *visarjanya* or a colon mark, which in the Sanskrit language is a symbol for voiceless aspiration(Malla ;2002: ii-iii).

Word initial vowels

Devanagari

English

/ /

/a/

/i/

/u/

/e/

/o/

Vowels in non-initial position

<i>Dev</i>	<i>Vowel</i>	<i>example</i>	<i>gloss</i>	<i>spelling</i>	<i>DR¹</i>
	/i/	t ^h i	'one'		(-)
	/u/	t ^h u	'self'		(-)
	/e/	me	'tongue'		(-)
	/l/	k	'leg(animal)'		(-)
	/o/	t ^w o	'maw'		(-)
	/a/	ka	'threads'		(- -)

Vowels with length in non-initial position

:)	/i:/	ki:	'insect'	ĩ:	(- -)
	/u:/	ku:	'spade'	:	(- -:)
	/e:/	ke:	'shoot'	:	(- -:)
	/:/	t :	'spade'	:	(- -:)
	/o:/	k ^h o:	'carrot'	:	(- -)
:)					
	/a:/	ga:	'pit'	:	(- - -)
:)					

Vowels with nasal in non-initial position

	/ /	k	'groove'	ĩ	(- -)
)					
	/ /	k	'husband'		(- -)
	/ /	k ^h	'face'		(- -)

¹ Dev=Devanagari, DR= Diacritic Representation, N= Nepali

	/ - /	k ^h -	'thing'		(- -)
.	/õ/	p ^h õ	'pathi(N)'	ĩ	(- - -)
	/ã/	p ^h ã	'pig'		(- - - -

)

Vowels with long nasal in non-initial position

:	/ :/	k ^h	'madal(N)'		(- - -
---	------	----------------	------------	--	---------

- :)

:	/u:/	t :	'well'	:	(- - - :)
:	/ :/	p :	'shit'	:	(- - - -

:)

:	/ - - /	g -	'cock'	:	(- - - :)
':	/õ:/	põ:	'pungo(N)'	ĩ:	(- - - -

:)

:	/ã:/	da:	'money'	:	(ǎ - - -
---	------	-----	---------	---	-----------

- :)

Representation of diphthongs

<i>Diphthongs</i>	<i>represented as</i>	<i>example</i>	<i>gloss</i>	<i>spelling</i>
y	-i	gh ilo	'litter bed'	
ay	a-i	dai	brother(N)	
oy	o-i	oi	'fifty'	
w	-u	k uca	'pebble'	
aw	a-u	dau	'opportunity(N)'	
ey	e-i	beimani (N)	'dishonest'	
iu	i-u	biu	'give(v)'	
ui	u-i	sui	'thirty'	

2.3.2 Consonants:

It is clear that Consonants are combined letters with schwa. The total number of consonants is displayed in 2.3.3.2. Here we discuss about cluster writing. For this purpose, Devanagari alphabets are categorized into four groups: single lined letters, parallel lined letters, bottom- opened, and bottom closed letters.

Single lined:

The single lined letters are made on the basis of single vertebra or vertical line. These letters geminate in a single vertical line (), where as r-clusters and u-compound form in the same vertical line. Like:

<i>Letter</i>	<i>geminate</i>	<i>r-cluster</i>	<i>u-compound</i>
	क्	क्र	
	च	च्र	
	छ	छ्र	
	ज	ज्र	
	ट	ट्र	
	ड	ड्र	
	ण	ण्र	
	त	त्र	
	थ	थ्र	
	द	द्व	
	प	प्र	
	फ	फ्र	
	ब	ब्र	
	स	स्र	
	२	.	रु
	ल	ल्र	

² *ambiguous form*

Parallel lined

The parallel lined letters can be called *double lined* letters, since the letters are composed of two parallel lines. These letters, in course of gemination, replace its ending vertical line with appendixes letter. During r-cluster, and u-compound formation r- and u- marker attaches in the lateral vertical line.

	ख	ख	
	व	व	
	ध	ध	
	घ	घ	
	झ	झ	
	ञ	ञ	
म	म ³	म	मु
	र	र	

Bottom-opened

These are middle part swollen letters also known as *gravid letters*. The letter is more or less similar to single lined letters. These letters geminate, r-cluster, and u-compound form in the opened bottom. For Devanagari script न (), ल (ल), म (म) are clusters with /h/ so these letters do not expect more clarification rather it follows the rule of /h/.

	न	न	
	ल	ल	
	म	म	
ल	ल ⁴	ल	लु

Bottom closed

³ rare clusters

⁴ do

This letter has opened top with closed bottom hence named bottom closed. This letter geminates in the unmarked bottom part () (modern font designers made it in double lined format). In r-cluster formation, r-marker attaches in the bottom part with upward bifurcate r-marker (𑂣𑂱). In the same manner, u-marker attaches in the bottom ().



2.3.3 Diacritics

The Devanagari symbols represent as follows:

<i>Diacritics</i>	<i>name of the diacritics</i>	<i>representation</i>
		stands for syllabic end with ' ' sound
+		stands for syllabic end with 'a' sound
		stands for syllabic end with 'i' sound
		stands for syllabic end with 'u' sound
		stands for syllabic end with 'e' sound
		stands for syllabic end with 'o' sound
:	𑂣	stands for vowel length
		stands for nasal sound
:	𑂣 𑂣	stands for long nasal sound
,	𑂣	stands for pause
	𑂣	stands for full stop
?	𑂣	stands for question
""	𑂣 𑂣	quotation mark

2.3.4 Kodpa in Devanagari

/ Vowels

: / Short

⁵ rare

⁶ rare

/ /

/a/

/i/

/u/

/e/

/o/

: /Long

:

/ /

:

/a:/

:

/i:/

:

/u:/

:

/e:/

:

/o:/

ᵐ ᵏ : /Short nasal

/ /

/ã/

/ /

/ /

/ /

/õ/

ᵐ ᵏ : /Long nasal

:

/ /

:

/ã:/

:

/ :/

: /:/

: /:/

ː /ɔ:/

/ Consonants

/k /

/k^h /

/g /

/g^h /

/ /

h

/ /

/c /

/c^h /

/j /

/j^h /

/t /

/t^h /

/d /

/d^h /

/n /

h

/n^h /

/p /

/p^h /

/b /

	/b ^h /
	/m /
भ	/ʃ /
	/y /
	/r /
थ	/ɪð /
	/l /
ड	/lɛ /
	/v /
ढ	/ɳ /
	/s /
	/h /

/Numerals

<i>Devanagari</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>Spelling</i>	<i>Gloss</i> ⁷	
	1	t ^h i	'one'	
	2	nis	'two'	
	3	so	'three'	
	4	pi	'four'	
	5	o	'five'	
	6	k ^h u	'six'	
	7	७ ण्	n ^h ya	'seven'
	8	ce	'eight'	
	9	gu	'nine'	

⁷ The format is developed from Chelliah, Shobhana L.(1997:372-3)

2.4 Organization

The organization of the alphabets are in the Devanagari alphabetic order that is ka[], kha[], ga[], gha[] and diacritics are based on pronunciation that is consonants followed by the syllabic diacritic mark. Independent diacritics like comma [,], full stop [], question mark [?], quotation mark [""] are independently arranged. Numerals are arranged in cardinal order system.

2.5 Order

The hierarchy of the letters is in pronunciation that is Vowel: short, long, short nasal, long nasal, consonant in Devanagari alphabetic order.

The combined Diacritic marks are used only after consonants. In case of diphthongs, no diacritics are used rather the individual vowels. Like *घड़लो*, (not *घैलो*), *कउचा*, (not *कौचा*), *बेड़मानी* (not *बैमानी*).

The cited examples for the letters are selected on the bases of their circumstance, work, and culture like house and parts of a house, land, mountain, hill, tree, plants, fruits, tools on which they are conversant with that may create reverence to their culture and labor. During the selection concrete noun words are prioritized, that is because they may learn the things through touching, feeling, seeing the object.

2.6 Conclusion

The writing system heads in four directions: rightward horizontal (almost all the scripts), leftward horizontal (Arabic script), downward vertical (Chinese/ Japanese/Korean/Kutilla) and upward vertical (rare).

KODPA, an unwritten Tibeto-Burman language adapted Devanagari script, written in rightward horizontal axis with modification that suites for the language.

Nevertheless, language as if Newar, a well defined or KODPA, an undefined is attempting to adapt Devanagari script in which ρ ||(३), ⇒ |(|), |← |(३), ↑ |(३) are individual phonemes.

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Appendix

The Devanagari Kodpa

पीहाआखो व उया माने

माआखो / Vowels

Short/ पुचाहाआखो

/ /		[p]	'mango',
		[usi]	'mandible'
/a/		[alo]	'sky'
	फ	[amsi]	'Guava'
		[aca]	'pointed knife'
/ I/	,	[isa]'	'sickle',
	ह	[irha]	'light'
/u/	,	[uk ^h :]	'earthen water jug'
		[ku]	'length of 18 inches' / 'luggage'
/e/	,	[c ^h e]	'head'
/o/		[obu]	'mortar hollow block' 'okhal'

Long/

:	/ :/	हः	[korhΛ:]	nail corn
:	/a:/	:	[k ^h a:]	'Glass'
:	/i:/	:	[i:]	'Bride'
:	/u:/	:	[d ^h u:]	'Dust'
:		:	[ku:]	'Spade/ kodali'

:	/e:/	:	[ke:]	'Shoot (bamboo)'
:	/o:/	:	[g ^h o:]	'Grinding mill'

Short nasal/ इहासेकोला :

/ /	[a]	'wall'
/ã/		
/ /		
/ /	[d ^h]	'lion / tiger',
	[ku]	'husband'
/ / ,	[k ^h]	'face',
	[k ^h ja]	'egg'
/o/		

Long nasal/ इहासेकोताहाला : आखो

अँ :	/ /		
आँ :	/ã: /		
इँ :	/ :/		
उँ :	/u:/	कुँ :	[ku:] 'pitcher/ ghyampo'
एँ :	/e:/		
ओँ :	/o:/		

बाआखो / Consonants

क	/k /	करुवा,	[k ruwa]	'water pot'
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		कोरी,	[kɔri]	'Grinder (dhiki)',
		कउचा	[k uca]	'pebble'
ख	/k ^h /	खा,	[k ^h a]	'hen',
		खाः	[k ^h a:]	'Glass',
		खस्नी	[k ^h sni]	'chilly'
ग	/g /	गँः,	[g]	'cock',
		गोपँ	[gop]	'lapsi (sour fruit)'
घ	/g ^h /	घँइलो,	[g ^h ilo]	'litter bed'?
		घगा	[g ^h ga]	'miller'
		घँजा	[g ^h dza]	'leaflets'
ङ	/ /	ङे	[o]	'fish'/ 'five'
ञ	/ /	ञः	[:]	' front'
च	/c /	चरी,	[c ri]	'sweat'
		चा,	[ca]	'Soil'
		चाःकोरी	[ca :kiri]	' circular frame '
छ	/c ^h /	छार्राः,	[c ^h ar]	'fountain'
		छाँ	[c ^h i]	'Stool'
ज	/j /	जाइ	[jai]	'rice'
झ	/j ^h /	झेखा	[j ^h ek ^h a]	'window',
		झुडा	[j ^h u a]	'bird'
त	/t /	तः	[t :]	'spade',
		तोः,	[to:]	'maw',

		तुफ,	[tufe]	'broom',
		तासा	[tasa]	'tie band'
थ	/t ^h /	थँसी	[t ^h si]	'pillar'
द	/d /	दाला	[dala]	'bucket'
ध	/d ^h /	धना	[d ^h na]	'drum'
		धर्माः	[d ^h r]	'beam'
न	/n /	नचा	[n rca]	'jamara'
		नोरा	[nora]	'paddy plant'
	/n ^h /		[n ^h usu]	'hey ball'
प	/p /	पुरा,	[pura]	'bamboo',
		पुलो,	[pulo]	'roof',
		पा	[pa]	'ax'
फ	/p ^h /	फा,	[p ^h a]	'plinth'
		फाछा,	[p ^h achi]	'Gourd'
		फाँ	[p ^h a]	'pig'
ब	/b /	बँ,	[b]	'earth',
		बलेचा,	[b leca]	'butterfly',
		बसा	[b sa]	'insect'
भ	/b ^h /	भुँ	[b ^h u]	'disk'
म	/m /	मुगा,	[muga]	'monkey'
		मेसा,	[mesa]	'Buffalo'
		मुरु	[muru]	'Needle'
स	/ʃ /	स	[ʃ asa]	'dumsi/squirrel'?

य	/y /	या,	[ya]	'paddy'
		यापासी	[yapasi]	'Nepali apple'
र	/r /	रन्जा	[r nja]	'wood leveler'
क	/r /	कः	[kor o]	'nail corn'
	/l /		[laja]	'maize'
			[lusi]	'Nepali pestle'
ल	/l ^h /	ल :	[l ^h]	'stone'
		/v /	[va]	'teeth'
व	/v ^h /	व :	[v ^h]	'hole'
	/s /	, ,	[sa]	'cow',
		रु,	[suru]	'plough',
		, ,	[sima]	'tree',
			[sura]	'nest'
	/h /		[ha ^k hi]	'root'

Twelve letter / :

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