NAVLIPI USER GUIDE

NAVLIPI

NAVLIPI (see https://navlipi.org/) is a new (2012) **universal alphabet** (script) usable for ALL the world's languages.

Based on the Latin (Roman) alphabet, it uses the 26 letters of this alphabet as used for English, plus just 22 others, for a total of **48 letters**. (A few examples of the other letters are **ɬ**, **hₒ**, **ŧ**, **ɲ** and **Ω**.)

NAVLIPI uses the Latin alphabet phonetically, much as in the original Latin and modern Spanish. It is a highly ***phonetic*** alphabet, with 1-to-1 correspondence of letters with sounds. NAVLIPI is pronounced exactly as it is written. NAVLIPI is very user-friendly.

NAVLIPI is also a ***phonemic***** (*****for definitions of this and other terms asterisked below, see: ******ABCs OF PHONETICS AND PHONEMICS FOR THE NON-LINGUIST – NAVLIPI) alphabet — it claims to be the only world alphabet which expressly encodes and shows *phonemic* information.

With its 48 letters, NAVLIPI accurately represents ALL the world's languages, including tonal ones like Mandarin and click languages of South Africa.

NAVLIPI uses *no* accent marks.

NAVLIPI *does* distinguish between lower and upper case (capital) letters. However, this is exactly as in English (e.g. initial caps for names and the beginning of a sentence)— there is no phonetic or phonemic distinction between lower and upper case letters in NAVLIPI.

NAVLIPI also has a very simple keyboard. ***Free*** **keyboard Apps** are available for Android (phone/tablet, Google Play Store), iOS (iPhone/iPad, Apple Store), Windows PC and Apple Mac (https://navlipi.org/).

Compare this to the alphabet of the International Phonetic Association (IPA), which has 174 letters, does not expressly encode or show phonemic information (although specialized subsets of the IPA alphabet can be used to convey phonemic information), and is difficult to keyboard.

*"**Why NAVLIPI**?!"*. Because without encoding *phonemic* info, it is difficult or impossible to write, say, Mandarin and English, or Hindi and Tamil, in the same alphabet.

NAVLIPI is starting to be used for documenting endangered languages, including in India and Australia (see sub-tabs under *Endangered, Ethnic Minority Languages in NAVLIPI* tab on website, https://navlipi.org/), and as a bridge alphabet within the Indian linguistics community. It is also usable in Natural Language Processing and Computational Linguistics.

SOME BASICS OF NAVLIPI

- ***Long vowels:*** By reduplication. Thus (NAVLIPI letters in **red bold**):
  - short **i** (as in English *hit*), Hindi इ; long **ii** (English *heat* , Hindi ई);
  - short **u** (English *put* , Hindi उ); long **uu** (English *boot* , Hindi ऊ);
  - short **e** (English *pet*), long **ee** (English *fair,* vowel in Hindi है).

- ***Some other common vowels:***
  - **a** (as in English *but*, Hindi अ).
  - **aa** (long vowel, English *father*, Hindi आ; Malayalam ആ).
  - **aa**ₒ (short version of previous vowel, as used in many Dravidian languages, e.g. Malayalam ആ).
  - **ɛ** (English *gray*, Hindi ए; Spanish *que*). Vs. **e** (English *pet*).
  - **ɔ** (inverted-**c**, English *Jack*).
  - **Ω** (English *ball*). Vs. **o** (English *gold*)
  - **q** (English *about*, 2nd vowel in Hindi यन्त्र).
  - **y** (French *tu*, German *über*).

- ***Some common non-vowels:***
  - **j** (English *yes*, Hindi य).
  - **ɟ** (inverted-**j**, English *Jack* Hindi ज).
  - **c** (Spanish *chica* Hindi च).
  - **shᵩ** (English *shoot* Hindi श).
  - **zhᵩ** (English *pleasure*).
  - **tt** (***t-***sound of English, West European (but not Spanish), languages, "*alveolar*"**).
  - **dt** (***d–***sound of English, West European (but not Spanish) languages, "*alveolar*"**).
  - **ŧ, ŧhₒ, đ, đhₒ, ɳ, ɭ** (Hindi, Marathi, Sanskrit ट, ठ, ड, ढ, ण, ळ; ***t-, d– n-, l-***and related sounds of Indian languages where the tongue is curled back—"*retroflex*"*** , ***मूर्धन्य***)).

- ***Nasals:***

- As tilde symbol (**~**); place *after* syllable being nasalized. Thus (NAVLIPI in **red**): Hindi ***हाँ*** **haa~**; Portuguese ***Saõ*** **Saao~**.

- ***Qualifiers placed <u>after</u> the letter they qualify:***
  - **h_o** indicates ***aspiration*** (extra breath, ***महाप्राण***). So **k** (Hindi ***क***) becomes **kh_o** (***ख***) etc.
  - **h_φ** indicates ***fricatization***** (frictional or roughing or hissing sound, as in *sssss, hhhhhh, fffffff*). So (NAVLIPI in **red**): English (British/American pronunciation) ***th****in* **th_φ**in; ***th****is* **dh_φ** (Respectively, dental consonants **t** and **d**, with *fricative*** qualifier **h_φ**, become **th_φ** and **dh_φ**.)
  - **$_o$** (subscript-***o***) indicates that the sound can be pronounced unaspirated *or* aspirated. Thus, **p_o**, used in English, indicates that the sound can be pronounced as both a ***p*** (bilabial unaspirated) and a ***ph_o*** (bilabial aspirated) without changing the meaning of the word.
  - **^** indicates that the sound can be pronounced unvoiced *or* voiced. Thus, **b^**, used in Mandarin, indicates that the sound can be pronounced as both a ***p*** (bilabial unvoiced) and a ***b*** (bilabial voiced) without changing the meaning of the word, but that it is preferably pronounced as ***b***.

- ***Examples of common phonemic** renditions:***
  - **b^** (as noted above) represents both ***p*** (unvoiced**) and ***b*** (voiced**) in Mandarin, since it can be pronounced as either, and substituting one for the other does not change the meaning of a word in common Mandarin (***p****u* and ***b****u* both mean “no/not”).
  - **vw** represents both ***v*** and ***w*** sounds in Hindi and many other Indian languages, since substituting one for the other does not change the meaning of a word in these languages (***v****an* and ***w****an* both mean “forest” in Hindi).
  - **p_o** (with subscript-***o***, as noted above), used in English, indicates that the sound can be pronounced as both a ***p*** (bilabial unaspirated) and a ***ph_o*** (bilabial aspirated) without changing the meaning of the word.
  - **ph_8** for both the ***f***, and the ***ph_o*** (aspirated-***p***) sounds in Hindi and many other languages; substituting one for the other does not change the meaning of a word in these languages (e.g. in Hindi, ***f****al* and ***ph_o****al* both mean “fruit”). The **h_8** is a qualifier that means “this consonant and the fricative at the next, forward tongue position have the same phonemic value in this language”.

- ***Some other vowels:***
  - **r̂** Vowel (vocalic) **r**-sound of Indian and some Slavic languages (***ऋ***). (Sometimes designated “rhoticity” by the IPA.)
  - **o/** as in French ***f*****eui***lle*; **o/** German *sch****ö****n*.

- ***Some other non-vowels:***
  - **ʈ. ɖ. ɳ.** Respectively ***ट. ड. ण.*** of Hindi ("taps" or "flaps", where the tongue is lightly tapped).
  - **ɻ** (Tamil ழ , Malayalam ഴ, Latin transcription usually ***zh***. Retroflex ***l***–like sound.)
  - **x** German ***doch***, Hindi ***ख,*** The unvoiced velar fricatives.
  - **ƹ** This letter has not been assigned. Kept in reserve.

- ***TONES:*** Examples of transcription of tones (again with qualifiers or "tone marks" placed after the syllable they apply the tone to); shown, illustratively, for **Mandarin** only (for tones for other tonal languages such as Cantonese, Vietnamese, Yoruba, etc. see: HOW NAVLIPI WRITES TONES OF TONAL LANGUAGES – NAVLIPI) :
  - **˩** (***1st*** Mandarin *tone*, high and level.)
  - **˧˥** (***2nd*** Mandarin *tone*, rising.)
  - **˨˩˧** (***3rd*** Mandarin *tone*, falling-rising.)
  - **˥˩** (***4th*** Mandarin *tone*, falling.)
    - ***Examples,*** *Chinese-Simplified Transcription*:
      - **tthφie˩ tthφie˩ nii˨˩˧** (*谢谢你*, "thank you").
      - **chₒi˩ faan˥˩** (*吃饭*, "eat a meal").

EXAMPLES OF MAJOR LANGUAGES TRANSCRIBED IN NAVLIPI

THE FULL NAVLIPI ALPHABET, IN ITS ALPHABETICAL ORDER, AS TO BE TAUGHT

MAJOR INDIAN ALPHABETS IN NAVLIPI

SOME MORE DETAIL ON NAVLIPI

EXAMPLES OF NEW AND BORROWED LETTERS USED IN NAVLIPI

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