Pāli Accents

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0.1 Introduction

This article is intended to help get correct Pāli accents with articles and books downloaded from Zolag.

Over the years the methods of getting correct accents in text and on the web has changed. Zolag's current method is to use a modern Unicode font. There are still issues with using these fonts. Spell check does not work on some editors. Older web browsers/computers may not display correctly.

To check whether you are getting correct accents go to `www.zolag.co.uk` where there is a check at the bottom of the page.

If accents do not display properly try updating the browser or downloading a new one e.g Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox or Opera. Text editors and word processors need to be set for UTF-8 encoding.

0.2 Getting the accents

The examples below show all of the characters currently in use:

ā ī ṇ ñ ū ṭ ṅ ḷ Ñ Ā ṁ ṣ ṃ ḍ

However before this there were three main ways we used.

0.2.0.1 Special Fonts and Latex

The table shows two ways we have used to get Pāli characters as in the left column.

1. By using a specially modified font eg pCharter (download from `www.zolag.co.uk`). This translates typed characters in the 2nd column (available in most font sets) to the first. This font was then used in OpenOffice.

2. For printed documents, by using Latex. Latex codes in the last column get the characters in the first column.

   OpenOffice can export to Latex. If a document is written using the pCharter font, then it is converted to Latex by exporting in OpenOffice and then doing a search and replace on 3rd column with fourth column. This is because OpenOffice will produce Latex codes as in the third column. Sounds complicated-it is! pCharter font Normal font Latex code Latex code to get to get to get 1st column 2nd column.

Pcharter font	Standard font	Latex code to get 2nd column	Latex code to get first column
ā	å	\aa	\=a
ṇ	ù	\'u	\d n
ñ	ñ	\~n	\~n
ṅ	ò	\'o	\.n

ī	í	\'i	\=\ i{}
			brackets to get space after i
ṭ	ì	\`i	\d t
ū	ú	\'u	\=u
ḷ	î	\^i	\d l
ṃ	ÿ	\"y	\d m
ṁ	ó	\`m	\.m

0.2.0.2 The Velthuis scheme

The scheme below taken from:

- http://www.cambodianbuddhist.org/english/website/Pāli/index.html

was a better way of writing the text and displaying it on the web and still retain accent information.

We have used this scheme on some web pages (html)

N.B There is no need for this now as the Unicode font can be used for both text and html

The Velthuis scheme: double the vowels, punctuate the consonants. This scheme was originally developed in 1991 by Frans Velthuis for use with his "devnag" Devanagari font, designed for the TEX typesetting system (see http://www.ctan.org/.)

Pāli and Sanskrit scholars have since adopted it as a standard technique in Internet correspondence (see, for example, the BUDDHA-L discussion group and the Journal of Buddhist Ethics). In the Velthuis scheme two basic rules are observed: Long vowels (those usually typeset with a macron (bar) above them) are doubled: aa ii uu For consonants, the diacritic mark precedes the letter it affects. Thus, the retroflex (cerebral) consonants (usually typeset with a dot underneath) are: .r .t .th .d .dh .n .m .s .l. The guttural nasals (m or n with a dot above) are represented by "m and "n . The palatal nasal (n with a tilde) is ~n. This scheme is precise, although it does take some getting used to: paa.naatipaataa verama.nii sikkhaa-pada.m samaadiyaami.

0.3 Typesetting

The simplest and free way to typeset a book or article with accents is to use OpenOffice and to copy and paste the accented fonts (from here). Book templates are available from Lulu.com. Typing in accented characters is not so straight forward and is software dependent.

I use Gvim and Gedit for editing text and Texinfo for formatting it. (gedit does not spell check properly). Web pages use Asciidoc markup (also Pandoc, Markdown and Rest are compatible). Latex need the package ucs and [utf8x] inputenc to be able to use Unicode fonts. Texinfo needs @documentencoding UTF-8 in the header. Computer OS used is Debian Linux.