LEARNING LEPCHA IN THE 21ST CENTURY

An introduction to the Wangboo Framework,
the modern way to learn the ancient language.

RONGRING

LANGUAGE OF THE MOUNTAINS

Gideon Taso Lepcha

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Acknowledgment

First of all, I would like to thank God for providing me the wisdom to write this book.

I would like to thank my parents, father & mother in law, my wife and daughter for their constant support and encouragement.

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to Dr. Heleen Plaisier for her continuous support and directly contributing the section on calligraphy an excerpt of the research done by her.

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to Dr. Jenny Bentley for agreeing to write the Introduction of this book.

I extend my special thanks to the following people:

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FOREWORD

With the Wangboo Framework and the Rongring Online Global Lepcha language Course, Ryen Gideon Taso Lepcha and his team make a vital and historically important contribution to Lepcha culture, literature and religion. By lowering the barrier for people to become familiar with the Lepcha writing system, they also lower the barrier to accessing the cultural, literary, religious and linguistic heritage of the Lepcha people. This is all the more important because so far those who have studied the Lepcha traditions, including myself, have only scratched the surface of what this rich tapestry has to offer. I am also hopeful that being able to use the Lepcha writing system will inspire a new generation of writers and scholars to document their own literary and cultural endeavours directly in the Lepcha language. The word that comes to mind to summarize my response to this very useful initiative is most definitely a very loud "Aaaaachuleeey!".

Dr. Heleen Plaisier
Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh

INTRODUCTION
How to learn a language? A conversation

Dr. Jenny Bentley *(Associated researcher, ISEK Ethnologie, University of Zürich)*

This introduction arose from a conversation we had, when Gideon Taso Lepcha was in the process of finishing the first draft of this book. He had shared his strive with me – what motivated him to dedicate himself to the preservation of Lepcha language while working a high powered job and raising a young family. My first reaction was, the people reading this book need to know what inspired it and get a sense of how much love, passion, and time was put into it. I asked if I could interview Gideon and try and find some words of introduction.

"My vision was to bring the authentic language to the Lepcha community & enthusiasts, but backed with logic and resource."

Identity

Lepcha is a Tibeto Burman language, classified as "*definitely endangered*" in the UNESCO's List of Endangered Languages, meaning that most children in Lepcha speaking households are no longer learning their mother tongue at home. This is something Gideon experienced in his own childhood and enkindled his determination to revive the language by simplifying the pedagogy and enhancing accessibility for the next generation. The UNESCO list officially mentions a minuscule number of 30'000 Lepcha speakers in the world.

"*When a language dies, everything dies.*" Gideon's word get to the heart of the sense of this existential loss experienced by many Lepchas and Indigenous people around the world. Most Lepcha people strongly feel that they belong to a "vanishing tribe" to quote Arthur Foning (2003) and carry this awareness with deep-rooted sadness. It is a sense of loss that is individual and collective and ontological. It is a part of everything, hollowing it out, leaving a shell, an emptiness maybe that screams to be filled.

Language is about identity. UNESCO's definition neatly encapsulates this approach in its use of the term "mother tongue". Language is placed in the ancestral womb, something passed on from one generation to the next, something carrying history of the forebears but also the future of generations to come.

Language triggers memory. Gideon tells me about how he grew up in Bom Busty, a village close to the hill town of Kalimpong. He was what one would call "privileged" to receive a good education in a private school – paving the path of his future career in IT and management. It is, however, something else he remembers when he reflects back upon his childhood days. It is the closeness to the environment around him, the fishing in the rivers, the plucking fruits from trees, the picnics out in the open.

"You know, most of the name of the rivers start with the letter ᰔ (ra) in Lepcha language," he interjects while remembering his childhood years. Language is an expression of seeing the world as it holds ways of understanding and thus also bringing things into existence that connects the past with the future, the humans with the environment and the more-than-human beings. It opens your eyes to different ways of seeing.

"Basically while visiting Lepcha villages and interacting with local people I stumbled upon a realization. And in all this what struck me, was that whenever I went to the villages, they conversed in Raongring (Lepcha language). It felt that I was somewhere not able to accept that I was losing my identity because when your're Raongkup (a Lepcha) and you do not know your language, it really pricks you. It is an unconscious thing." This is Gideon's personal experience while working with Lepcha villagers when he was building up Mayel Crafts, a social initiative to promote sustainable products and thereby supporting livelihood of the rural population with the aim of preventing migration. It was this experience that triggered the interest, the urge, to reconnect with his mother tongue.

This spark, this pinch, bore the seed of the Rongring Global Lepcha Language Online Course and ultimately of this publication. The momentum behind this endeavour is the determination to keep this language alive, moreover to make a language and the people practicing it, often declared on the brink of extinction, thrive again and potentially also find global recognition.

Simplicity

"I have designed a framework and an approach that enables people to learn Lepcha language" are the words Gideon used to describe the aim of this publication. Lepcha language was and remains – despite having a script – mainly a spoken language. Some Lepcha literature exists, Lepcha language and script are taught in government schools across Sikkim and in night schools in the Darjeeling & Kalimpong hills. Today, it is possible to do a Masters degree and even pursue a PhD in Lepcha language at the Sikkim University. For most, however, Lepcha script remains inaccessible and even fluent Lepcha speakers are not proficient in reading and writing in their own language. Additionally, as mentioned, youth has lost the ability to speak or understand their ancestral language. Hence, the doorways to the beautiful stories, the literature, and poems stay shut for many, preventing a learning of the past, preventing a growing in the future – especially with more and more Lepcha living in the urban areas, away from the channels of oral transmission.

Lepcha language primers exist, but they are difficult to access for a non-Lepcha speaker as they are in Lepcha itself and don't offer the translation and transliteration work required for an easier access to the language. The traditional way of learning Lepcha language is the Laozong, a syllabic scheme that comprises all possible combinations of consonants, conjunct consonants, and vowels and is sung in a rhythmic tone that supports the phonetic learning of the language. It has been made accessible by Ryen Lyansong Tamsang's

publication (2012), that also includes other lessons in Lepcha language, and is taught in the night schools. However, for someone not living in the environment and schooled in Western education system, it might seem discouraging or difficult to find access. Again another approach to Lepcha language is through linguistic studies, as done by Dr. Heleen Plaisier (2007). This, however, is hard to follow for the non-linguist.

The Rongring Lepcha Global Language Online Courses are designed to make accessibility to Lepcha language simple and fluid for the Lepcha learner. This publication complements the online process. It is semi-digital to support the reader in knowing the proper sound of the letters. You will find QR codes to hear the pronunciation of the syllables. Its creation arose from the observation that not everyone in the rural areas has access to online classes, be it because the poor network, lack of financial support to cover the cost of the course, or just of unfamiliarity with the medium. This publication is for everyone, it binds the courses back into the villages and into a more tactile age.

The focus of this publication is on self-learning. It is to supplement and support the online courses and combines the basic learning of script along the Wongboo framework with the grammar required for sentence construction as well as important conversational practice. Beyond all, this book is to open up another channel of accessibility in the quest to revive Lepcha language and bring it to the masses – be they of Lepcha origin or people interested in the Lepcha language, culture and life.

"So we do not want to let any stone unturned, our objective is to revive this language and make it the language of the masses and support people to learn and love this beautiful language called Raongring."

Curiosity

"I had to learn, unlearn and relearn." When sitting down and diving deep into understanding Lepcha language, Gideon was confronted with many questions, he knew no answers to: What exactly is the *rantet* ? Where does it come from? And how is it used? What is the difference between *ngatet* and *nindo*? How did *nindo* develop? Why are *ra thyu* and *ya thyu* composite letter symbols while *la thyu* forms an entirely new letter? What did the introduction of ᰚ *(ta)* ᰛ *(tha)* ᰜ *(da)* mean for Lepcha language? So for him, learning Lepcha language began with asking the questions on his mind to revered experts on Lepcha language and culture. It was about starting afresh and finding an understanding beyond the void, an understanding for how these syllables are pronounced, how words are rowed together to make sentences.

His journey did not answer all the questions, but that is not what this publication is about. Lepcha language has grown organically; it has not been streamlined by a nation state. People in different valleys have different accents and ways of formulating and pronouncing terms. It has grown from the hills, entwined in the roots and the jungles. We might not find answers to

some questions, buried in the fog of the forgotten, broken transmission lines. This publication rather aims at stirring your curiosity, dear reader. It is about throwing open questions that make people want to find the answers, that remind the learner of the beauty of this language. As Gideon put it, "*I am penning certain topics, so in future someone can read, wonder, and explore deeper into it. I am opening up many topics in this book and until now these topics were not addressed […] I want the research to be done and these questions to be answered, because this is how we understand how our language works, it has to be interesting and lucid because if you do not understand something, you will not learn it. This is what I have found. So with this publication, I am contributing to making Lepcha language more accessible and approachable. I am bringing out these question so that it goes into the mind of everyone and triggers people to think about - nothing more than that.*"

Vision

Tell me about your vision? About what you want to achieve in the next 10 years, 20 years? I asked Gideon and noticed immediately, it was the right question. *"I am a great optimist."* He answers and smiles. *"I want people to speak Lepcha language, globally at least know about the language, say 'Khamree' and recognize our letters. Like a brand, I want the language to be loved."*

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Plaisier, Heleen. 2007. Lepcha Grammar. Leiden: Brill.
Tamsang, Lyangsong. 2012. Rong Ring Hlaap. Learn Lepcha. Kalimpong: Lyangong Tamsang.

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CHHYOMING AAKUP

(Vowels)

Chhyoming Aakup are nine independent letters from the set of the Lepcha alphabets and symbols. The letters in the Chhyoming Aakup are equivalent to the vowels of the English Language.



Note: ᰛ(*a*) is considered as the main letter in the Lepcha Language. This is because all the letters in the Chhyoming Aakup are formed using the letter ᰛ(*a*). Moreover, all the Chhyoming Aamoo and the thyu letters have an inherent short ᰛ(*a*) affixed sound to them at the end.

ᰕᰛ(*ee*) needs to be pronounced with a rising intonation where as ᰕᰜ(*i*) needs to be pronounced with falling intonation.

You can scan the QR code to hear the correct pronunciation of the following letters that comprise the Chhyoming Aakup letters.

THAAMBIN

(Vowel symbols)

Thaambin are symbols for the nine Chhyoming Aakup letters. They are pronounced by adding a *'kup'* sound at the end of the vowel letters. The meaning of *'kup'* in the Lepcha Language is a child, a baby or an infant. The symbol ᰻ is also known as *'rantet'*. Rantet is an unique circumflex symbol that is used to indicate that a particular word needs to be pronounced with a rising intonation.

We can observe that all the Thaambin symbols are pronounced by adding a *kup* sound in the end since the Thaambin symbols have been extracted from the Chhyoming Aakup letters, but in case of *rantet* we don't use the same approach as rantet is an independent symbol (in order to understand the origin of *rantet* more research is required).

Note: Rantet is not added or included while writing the main letter ᰀ(a) in the Chhyoming Aakup since adding a rantet to the main letter would provide a short break while pronouncing the main letter ᰀ(a).

Usability: Rantet is used with the main letter ᰀ(*a*) while forming a word i.e ᰀ᰻(*a*) ᰀ᰻ᰮ (*ap*) ᰀ᰻ᰴ(*ak*). At the same time it is used with all the consonants in combination with or without Tyelboo Thaambin.

ᰀ = ◌᰻

a = rantet

ᰀᰣ = ◌ᰣ

aa = aa kup

ᰁᰀ = ᰁ◌

ee = ee kup

ᰁᰀ᰻ = ᰁ◌᰻

i = i kup

ᰃᰀ = ᰃ◌

o = o kup

ᰃᰀᰴ = ᰃ◌ᰴ

ao = ao kup

ᰀᰤ = ◌ᰤ

au = au kup

ᰀᰵ = ◌ᰵ

oo = oo kup

ᰀᰶ = ◌ᰶ

aey = aey kup

CHHYOMING AAMOO

(Consonants)

Chhyoming Aamoo are the twenty eight independent letters from the set of the Lepcha alphabets and symbols. The letters in the Chhyoming Aamoo are equivalent to the consonants of the English language. These consonants have an inherent short ᰛ(*a*) affixed sound to them at the end. The Chhyoming Aamoo is also known as 'Aamo Aaming'.

ᰀ ᰁ ᰂ ᰃ

ka kha ga nga

ᰄ ᰅ ᰆ ᰇ

chya chhya jya nya

ᰈ ᰉ ᰊ ᰋ

ta tha da na

ᰌ ᰍ ᰎ ᰏ ᰐ

pa pha fa ba ma

ᰑ ᰒ ᰓ ᰔ

tsa tsha za ya

ᰕ ᰖ ᰗ ᰘ

ra la ha va

ᰙ ᰚ ᰛ

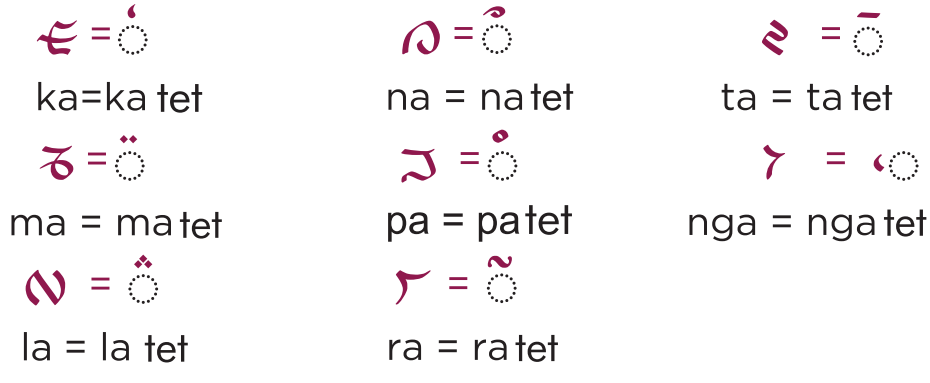
sa sya wa

You can scan the QR code to hear the correct pronunciation of the following letters that comprise the Chhyoming Aamoo letters.

TYELBOO THAAMBIN

(Consonant Symbols)

Tyelboo Thaambin are symbols for eight specific Chhyoming Aamoo letters or consonants. The specific consonants that have their Tyelboo Thaambin are ᰀ *(ka)*, ᰆ *(ma)*, ᰊ *(la)*, ᰐ (na), ᰎ *(ta)*, ᰔ *(pa)*, ᰚ *(ra)*, and ᰂ *(nga)*. The Tyelboo Thaambin are pronounced by adding a '*tet*' at the end of the aforementioned Chhyoming Aamoo letters. The meaning of a '*tet*' in the Lepcha language is sign or symbol.



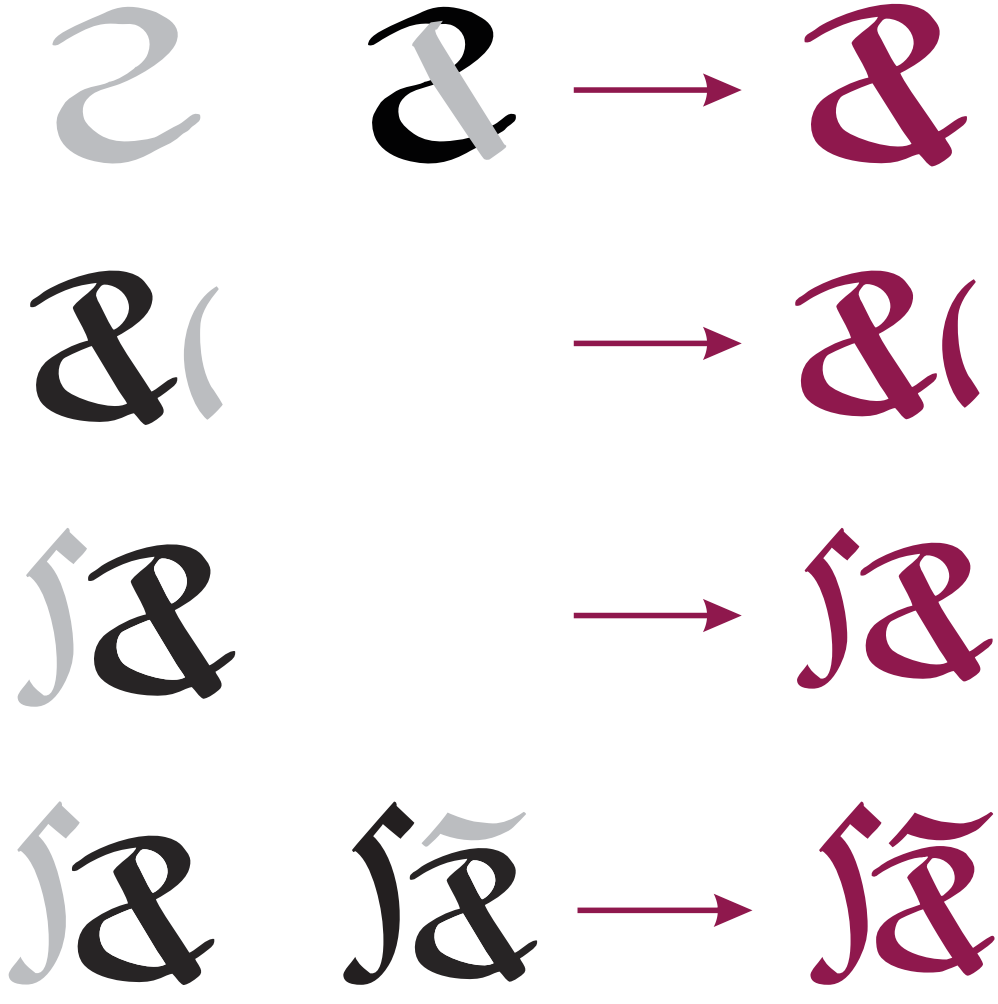
ᰣ nindo

ᰣ *(nindo)* is an independent symbol and it is used only with the consonants while forming a word. At the same time, ᰣ *(nindo)* cannot be combined with any Thaambin or thyu letters to form a word. ᰣ (nindo) is always placed before the consonant letter and it is pronounced as *'ang'*.

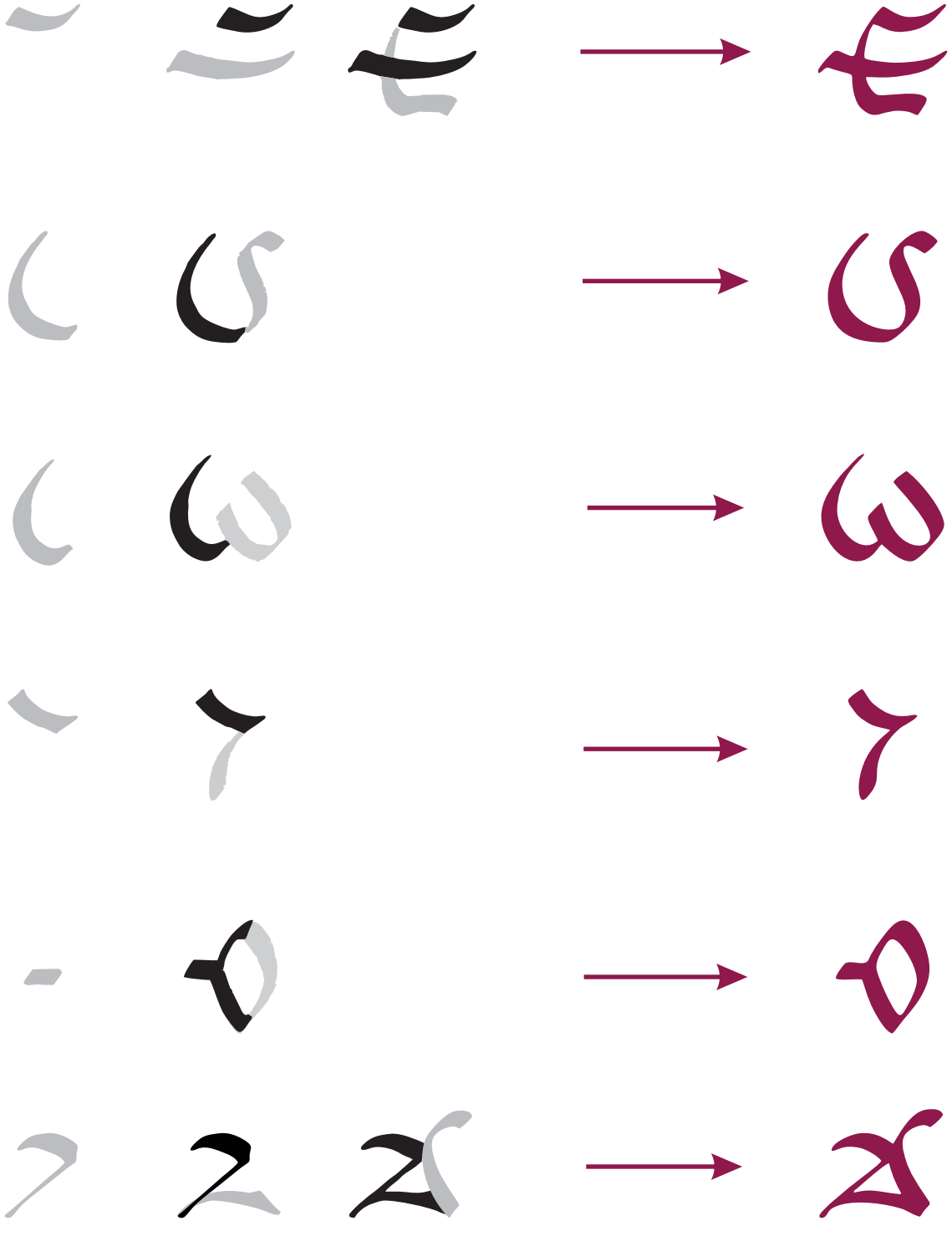
LEPCHA CALLIGRAPHY

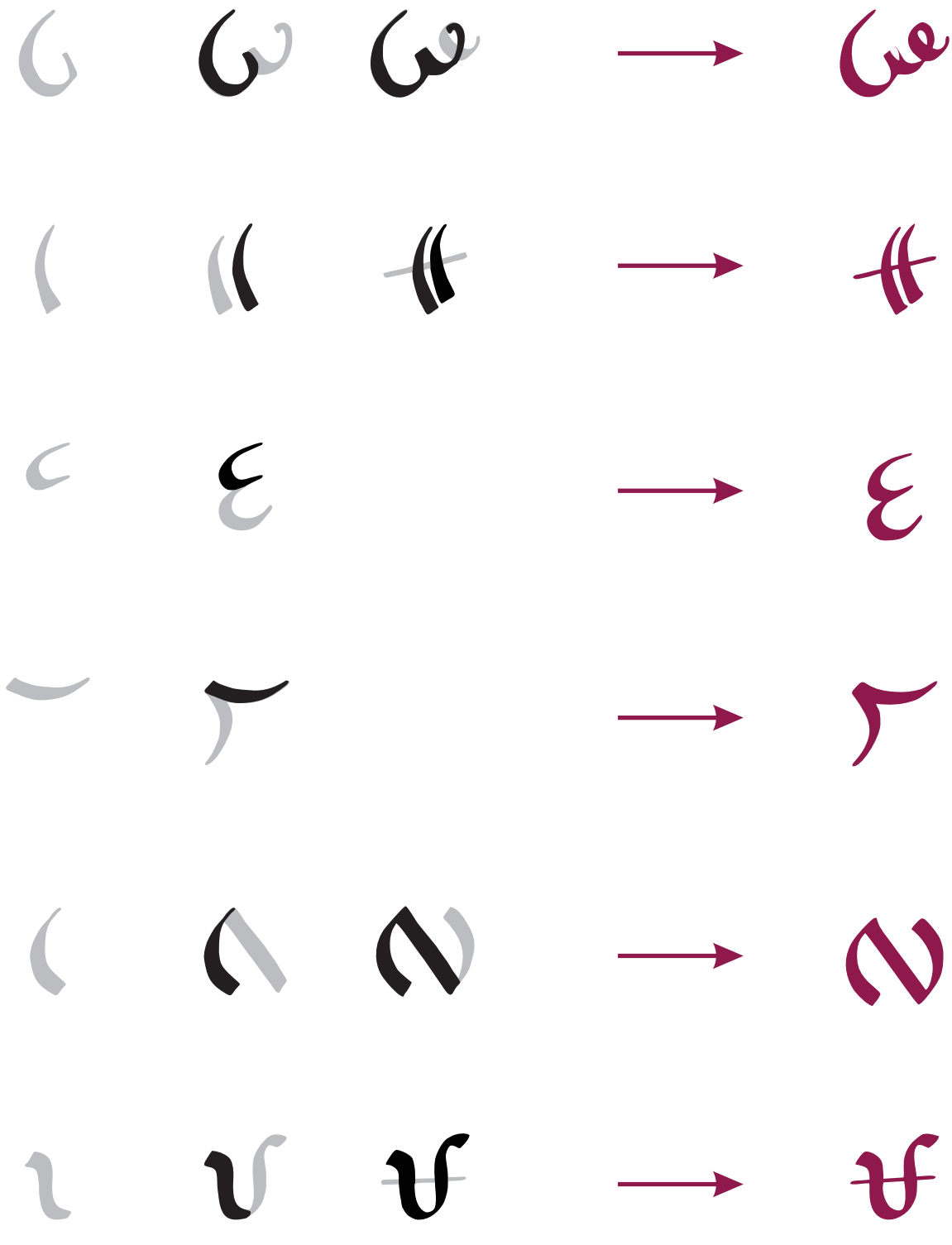
A common query of how and where to begin and end the stroke of the pen arises when writing the Lepcha alphabets and symbols. This is understandable as the alphabets of the Lepcha language are unique and can be a little intimidating to ped down for a new learner. There is no particular universal writing guidelines for putting down the Lepcha alphabets and symbols on paper. Moreover, the strokes that are required to make while writing the respective alphabets are not properly defined. This book tries to do the same by pictographically representing each pen stroke with the respective letter. This, therefore, helps in standardizing the chirography apart from facilitating a consistent writing pattern. This book provides the writing guidelines for the Chhyoming Aakup and the Chhyoming Aamoo letters.

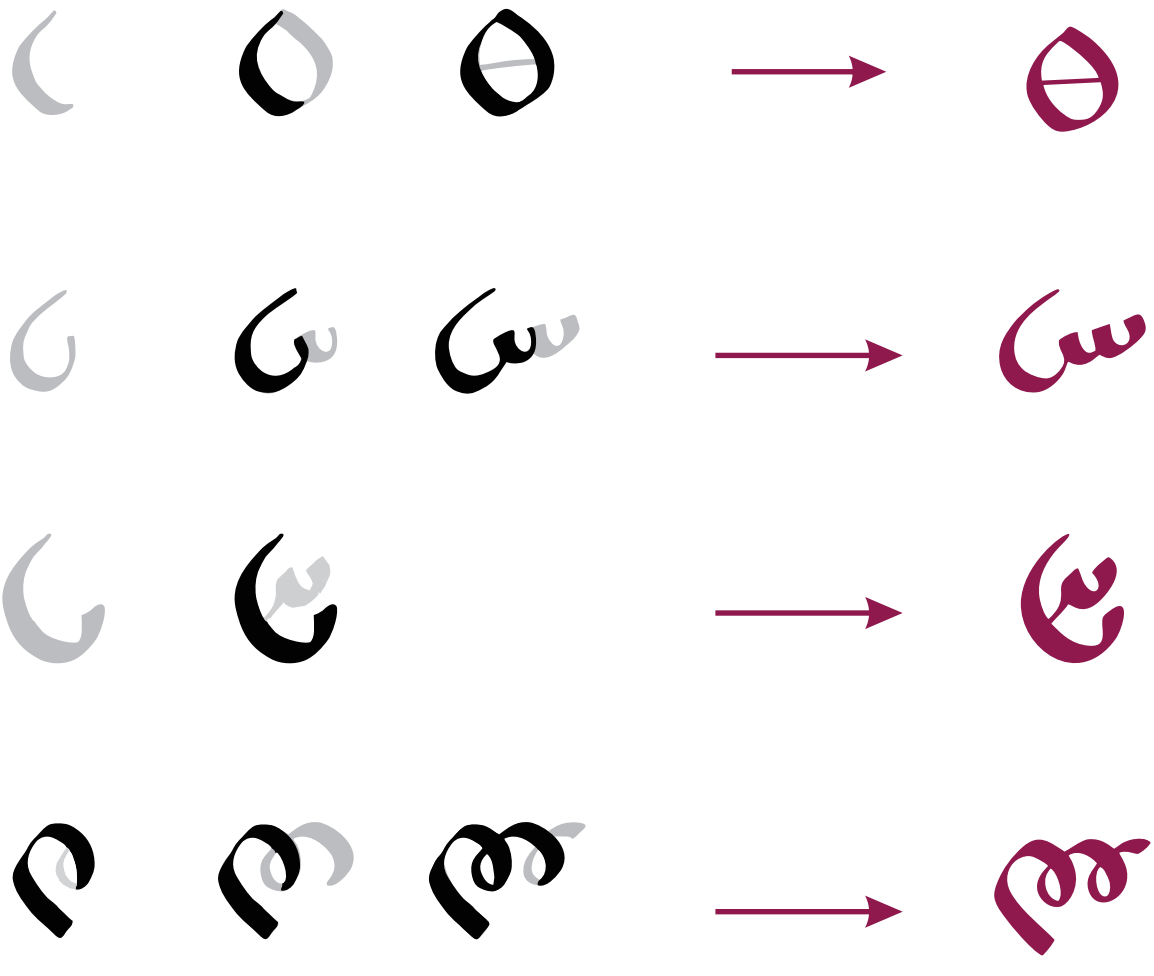
Writing Guidelines for Chhyoming Aakup



Writing Guidelines for Chhyoming Aamoo







ᰚᰤᰧ (*thyu*) letters or Conjunct letters

When the selected Chhyoming Aamoo letters (*consonants*) combine with the ᰛ (*ra*), ᰜ (*la*), and ᰟ (*ya*) letters, they produce a unique letter which is called ᰚᰤᰧ (*thyu*) or conjunct letters.

There are three types of thyu/conjunct letters

ᰛ ᰚᰤᰧ (*ra thyu*)

ᰜ ᰚᰤᰧ (*la thyu*)

ᰟ ᰚᰤᰧ (*ya thyu*)

Note: In case of ᰟ ᰚᰤᰧ (*ya thyu*) , thyu letters are formed by combining Chhyoming Aakup letter ᰠ (*a*) / Chhyoming Aamoo letters / ᰛ (*ra*) conjunct letters / ᰜ (*la*) conjunct letters with the letter ᰛ (*ra*) . This special case holds valid only with the formation of ᰟ (*ya*) thyu letters.

Hence, [Chhyoming Aakup letter ᰠ (*a*) / Chhyoming Aamoo letters / { ᰛ ᰚᰤᰧ (*ra thyu*) or ᰜ ᰚᰤᰧ (*la thyu*) } letters] + ᰟ (*ya*) letter = ᰟ ᰚᰤᰧ (*ya* thyu)

Example of ᰛ ᰚᰤᰧ (*ra thyu*)

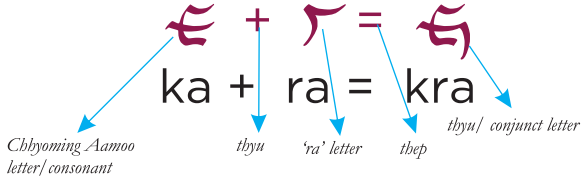


Fig 1.1

In the above figure we can see that the Chhyoming Aamoo letter ᰎ (*ka*) combines with the letter ᰛ (*ra*) to produce ᰛ ᰚᰤᰧ (*ra thyu*) which is pronounced as ᰎᰛ (*kra*).

'+' is called '*thyu*' in the Lepcha language.
'=' is called '*thep*'in the Lepcha language.

Hence, Chhyoming Aamoo letters + ᰛ (*ra*) letter = ᰛ ᰚᰤᰧ (*ra thyu*)

Example of ᰍᰛᰧ (*la thyu*)

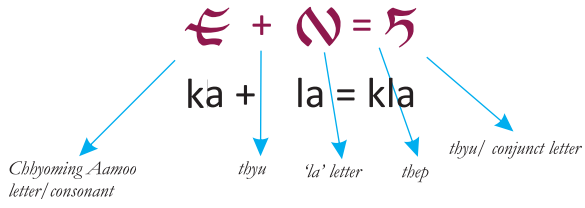


Fig 1.2

In the figure 1.2 we can see that the Chhyoming Aamoo letter ᰀ (*ka*) combines with the letter ᰍ (*la*) to produce ᰍᰛᰧ (*la thyu*) which is pronounced as ᰅ (*kla*).

'+' is called '*thyu*' in the Lepcha language.
'=' is called '*thep*'in the Lepcha language.

Hence, Chhyoming Aamoo letters + ᰍ (*la*) letter = ᰍᰛᰧ (*la thyu*)

Example of ᰋᰛᰧ (*ya thyu*)

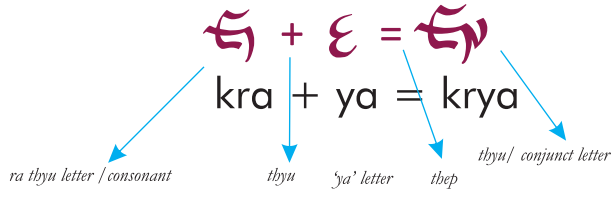


Fig 1.3

In the figure 1.3 we can see that the thyu letter ᰄ (*kra*) combines with the letter ᰋ (*ya*) to produce ᰋᰛᰧ (*ya thyu*) which is pronounced as ᰆ (*krya*).

'+' is called '*thyu*' in the Lepcha language.
'=' is called '*thep*' in the Lepcha language.

Hence, [Chhyoming Aakup letter ᰠ (*a*)/ Chhyoming Aamoo letters /{ ᰎᰛᰧ (*ra thyu*) or ᰍᰛᰧ (*la thyu*)}letters] + ᰋ (*ya*) letter = ᰋ (*ya*) ᰛᰧ

ཏྲ་རྟགས་ (*ra thyu*) or ra conjunct letters

There are eight Chhyoming Aamoo (*consonant*) letters that when joined with the letter ར (*ra*) form unique conjunct letters called the ཏྲ་རྟགས་ (*ra thyu*).These conjunct letters have their distinct pronunciations.

The eight Chhyoming Aamoo letters { ཀ (*ka*), ག (*ga*),ང (*nga*), ཇ (*pa*), ཙ (*fa*), ཐ (*ba*), ཟ (*ma*),ཧ (*ha*)} +ར (*ra*) letter = ཏྲ་རྟགས་ (*ra thyu*)

During the formation of ཏྲ་རྟགས་ (*ra thyu*) letters , the lower half (ྲ) of the ར (*ra*) letter combines with the respective eight Chhyoming Aamoo letters to form the final ཏྲ་རྟགས་ (*ra thyu*) letter. Therefore, we can identify a distinct pattern in the final ཏྲ་རྟགས་ (*ra thyu*) letters.

ཀ + ར = ཀྲ
ka + ra = kra

ཙ + ར = ཙྲ
fa + ra = fra

ག + ར = གྲ
ga + ra = gra

ཐ + ར = ཐྲ
ba + ra = bra

ང + ར = ངྲ
nga + ra = ngra

ཟ + ར = ཟྲ
ma + ra = mra

ཇ + ར = ཇྲ
pa + ra = pra

ཧ + ར = ཧྲ
ha + ra = hra

You can scan the QR code below to hear the correct pronunciation of the following letters that comprise ཏྲ་རྟགས་ (*ra thyu*) letters.

You can scan the QR code to hear the correct pronunciation of the following letters that comprise the ra thyu letters.

ᥓ ᥐᥱ (*la thyu*) or la conjunct letters

There are seven Chhyoming Aamoo (*consonant*) letters that when joined with the letter ᥓ (*la*) form unique conjunct letters called the ᥓ ᥐᥱ (*la thyu*). These conjunt letters have their distinct pronounciations.

The seven Chhyoming Aamoo letters {ᥑ (*ka*), ᥒ (*ga*), ᥔ (*pa*), ᥕ (*fa*), ᥖ (*ba*), ᥗ (*ma*), ᥘ (*ha*)} + ᥓ (*la*) letter = ᥓ ᥐᥱ (*la thyu*)

During the formation of ᥓ ᥐᥱ (*la thyu*) letters, we can observe that the final ᥓ ᥐᥱ (*la thyu*) letters are unique and distinct. Therefore, ᥓ ᥐᥱ (*la thyu*) doesn't follow a distinct pattern as seen while forming the ᥛ ᥐᥱ (*ra thyu*) and the ᥝ ᥐᥱ (*ya thyu*) letters. These letters makes our language unique and different from the others.

On careful observation, if we literally break the ᥓ (*la*) letter into two halves, we see that the second half (ᥒ)of the ᥓ (*la*) letter is used by the ᥝ ᥐᥱ (*ya thyu*) letters. The first half symbol however is seen in the ᥛ ᥐᥱ (*ra thyu*) letters. ᥓ ᥐᥱ (*la thyu*) letters, therefore, are unique and distinct.

ᥑ + ᥓ = ᥟ

ka + la = kla

ᥒ + ᥓ = ᥢ

ga + la = gla

ᥔ + ᥓ = ᥣ

pa + la = pla

ᥕ + ᥓ = ᥤ

fa + la = fla

ᥖ + ᥓ = ᥡ

ba + la = bla

ᥗ + ᥓ = ᥥ

ma + la = mla

ᥘ + ᥓ = ᥦ

ha + la = hla

You can scan the QR code to hear the correct pronunciation of the following letters that comprise the la thyu letters.

꤬ ꤢꤟ (*ya thyu*) or ya conjunct letters

When sixteen letters from the Chhyoming Aakup and Chhyoming Aamo combines with the letter ꤬ (*ya*), it produces a unique conjunct letter called the ꤬ ꤢꤟ (*ya thyu*). These conjunct letters have their distinct pronunciation.

Also, when a ꤡ ꤢꤟ (*ra thyu*) or a ꤦ ꤢꤟ (*la thyu*) letter combines with the letter ꤬ (*ya*), it produces a unique conjunct letter which is called ꤬ ꤢꤟ (*ya thyu*). These conjunct letters have their distinct pronounciation.

Chhyoming Aakup/ Chhyoming Aamoo letters + ꤬ (*ya*) letter = ꤬ ꤢꤟ (*ya thyu*)

Or {ꤡ ꤢꤟ (*ra thyu*) or ꤦ ꤢꤟ (*la thyu*)} letters + ꤬ (*ya*) letter = ꤬ ꤢꤟ (*ya thyu*).

There are a total of thirty ꤬ ꤢꤟ (*ya thyu*) letters.

During the formation of a ꤬ ꤢꤟ (*ya thyu*) letter, the lower half (ꤢ) from the ꤬ (*ya*) letter combines with the respective Chhyoming Aakup letter, Chhyoming Aamoo letters, ꤡ ꤢꤟ (*ra thyu*) or ꤦ ꤢꤟ (*la thyu*) letters to form the final ꤬ ꤢꤟ (*ya thyu*) letters. Therefore, we can identify a distinct pattern in the final ꤬ ꤢꤟ (*ya thyu*) letters.

You can scan the QR code below to hear the correct pronunciation of the following letters that comprise ꤬ ꤢꤟ (*ya thyu*) letters.

You can scan the QR code to hear the correct pronunciation of the following letters that comprise the ya thyu letters.



a + ya = aya



ka + ya = kya



kha + ya = khya



ga + ya = gya



ta + ya = tya



tha + ya = thya



da + ya = dya



pa + ya = pya



pha + ya = phya



fa + ya = fya



ba + ya = bya



ma + ya = mya



ra + ya = rya



la + ya = lya



ha + ya = hya



va + ya = vya



kra + ya = krya



kla + ya = klya



gra + ya = grya



gla + ya = glya



pra + ya = prya



pla + ya = plya



fra + ya = frya



fla + ya = flya



bra + ya = brya



Bla + ya = blya



mra + ya = mrya



mla + ya = mlya



hra + ya = hrya



hla + ya = hlya

INTRODUCTION TO WANGBOO FRAMEWORK

Introduction to the Wangboo Framework

The Wangboo Framework is a cohesive set of rules that serve as a guide for reading and writing the Lepcha words in a correct and an easy manner. This framework is especially convenient for those who are complete beginners in learning the Lepcha language for it also assists in writing the Lepcha words into Roman English and vice-versa without any spelling error.

It is important to highlight that the Wangboo Framework is not a doctrine that has existed along with the traditional Lepcha pedagogy of language teaching. This guideline for reading and writing the Lepcha language was designed and developed by *Ryen Gideon Taso Lepcha* keeping in mind the constraints and limitations of the manner in which the Lepcha language is currently being taught.

It is very evident that the Wangboo Framework of learning the Lepcha language makes a strong departure when compared to the traditional verbal method of teaching the Lepcha language. The very nature of the traditional dialogic approach implicitly warrants the requirement of a classroom-like scenario where the student is rather helpless without the teacher. There is nothing wrong with this approach but it brings a very strong dependency on the subjective human element, apart from the reading and learning material of the curriculum. This issue is further compounded by the fact that the resources for learning the Lepcha language are highly decentralized with institutions and/or language teachers following their own course designs. Hence, there does not exist a universal standardized set of rules that enable the reading and writing of the Lepcha language.

The Wangboo Framework tries to eliminate these aforementioned limitations and challenges of learning the Lepcha language. The comprehensive set of rules under this framework is absolute and infallible when it comes to reading and writing Lepcha words. The Wangboo Framework, therefore, can be seen as a universal, standardized and a logic-driven guidelines for reading and writing Lepcha words. This framework requires no preliminary knowledge of the language and its attributes such as the language accent making it suitable and undemanding for students across the globe, irrespective of their inability (if any) to properly execute the phonetics associated with the Lepcha language.

We can strongly rely on the effectiveness of the Wangboo Framework based on results that were assessed from the "Rongring Global Lepcha Language Online Course" offered by Rongring. Rongring too found its space of operation in the same as an e-learning platform. The undertaking of teaching and promoting the Lepcha language and preventing it from slowly becoming a mere stagnant artifact of Anthropology did indeed eventuate and the simplicity and the effectiveness of the Wangboo Framework, in this process, was witnessed. Today, this digital pedagogic platform is well ahead in achieving what it had initially aspired to accomplish. Rongring's online classes with it's carefully designed comprehensive lessons, including the *Wangboo Framework*, has successfully taught the Lepcha language to 200+

students across 13 countries (*Japan, Italy, Canada, North America, Maldives, Czech Republic, Switzerland, Holland, Nepal , Bhutan, New Zealand, India & UK*) within a year of his formation.

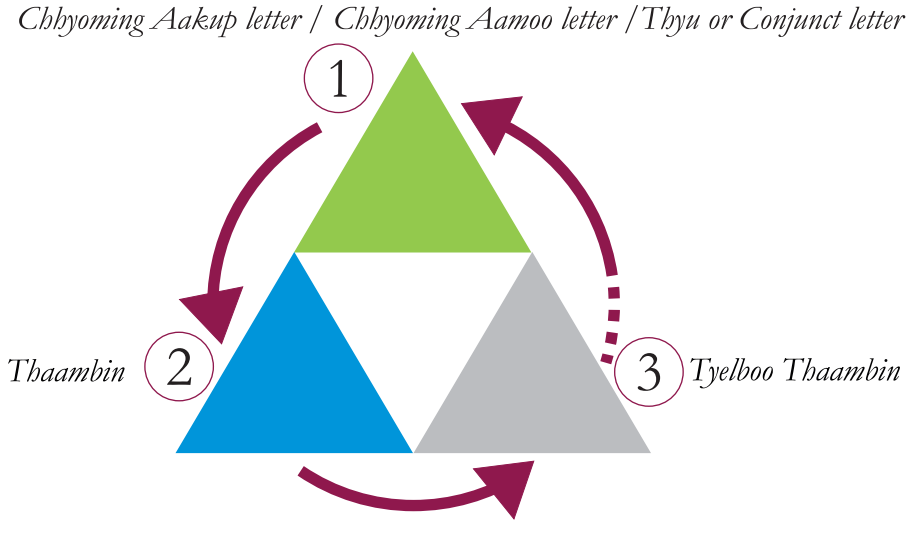


Figure 2.1

The above figure provides a framework to read and write Lepcha words in a proper and and lucid manner. Generally, Lepcha words are formed by the combination of a letter (*vowel, consonant or thyu*), a Thaambin and a Tyelboo Thaambin. Lepcha words can also be formed by the combination of a letter (*vowel, consonants or thyu*) and a Thaambin or just using a letter. Hence to read or write words we can follow the stepwise approach as stated below :

- Step 1: While reading or writing a word, we always start with the letter (*vowel, consonants or thyu*)
- Step 2: After beginning with a letter, we move to a Thaambin.
- Step 3: After the letter and the Thaambin, finally we move to a Tyelboo Thaambin.

In some cases, a word is formed by only using a letter (*vowel, consonants or thyu*) and a Thaambin. In such a case, we follow the stepwise approach as stated below:

- Step 1: While reading or writing a word, always start with the letter (*vowel, consonants or thyu*)
- Step 2: After beginning with a letter, we move to a Thaambin.

Normally, Lepcha words are generally formed as a result of the combination of a letter, a Thaambin and a Tyelboo Thaambin in sequential order as show in Fig 2.1. There might be a repetition of this sequence in Lepcha words.

Figure 2.2



Figure 2.3



Fig 2.4



In the figure 2.2 we can see a Lepcha word  (*lee*). In order to read or write this word, we follow the aforementioned steps.

We start with the letter  (*la*) and then move to Thaambin  (*ee kup*).

In the figure 2.3 we can see a Lepcha word  (*dum*). In order to read or write this word, we follow the aforementioned steps.

We start with the letter  (*da*) after which we move to the Thaambin  (*au kup*). We finally conclude by moving to the Tyelboo Thaambin  (*ma tet*).

Similarly in figure 2.4, we can see another Lepcha word (*hlen taop*). In order to read or write this word, we follow the same order of rules as we did for the above two words '*lee*' and '*dum*'. We start with the thyu letter  (*hla*) after which we move to the Thaambin  (*aey kup*). Then, we move to the Tyelboo Thaambin (*na tet*). However in this case, we see that there are more letter combinations. Therefore in order to form the word from the remaining letters, we follow the same order of rules. We start with the letter  (*ta*) after which we move to the Thaambin  (*ao kup*) and finally conclude by moving to the Tyelboo Thaambin  (*pa tet*).

It is extremely important to be clear with this step wise order to form the different words of the Lepcha language from any given combination of letters and symbols. It is only then that one can successfully execute the Wangboo Framework to read and write the Lepcha words correctly in a standardized manner.

There are thirteen rules in Wangboo Framework

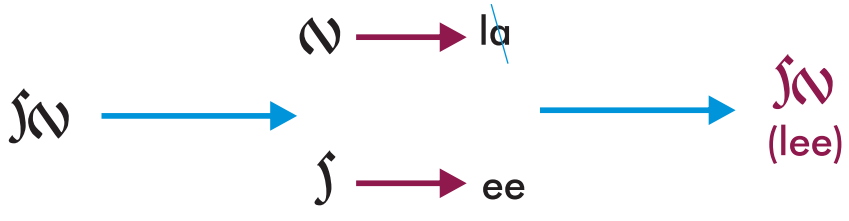
Rule 1

When a word is formed by combining a Chhyoming Aamoo letter and a Thaambin, we follow the stepwise approach of forming Lepcha words as mentioned previously. Therefore, while reading and writing those words we need to start from the letter and then move to the Thaambin. In this rule we will go in depth to understand the reading and writing techniques for the words that are formed by combining a Chhyoming Aamoo letter and a Thaambin.

Reading & writing technique in Lepcha: Always start from the Chhyoming Aamoo letter and then move to the Thaambin

Reading & writing technique in English: The final alphabet is omitted for the Chhyoming Aamoo letter. For the Thaambin, we write the alphabetical expression as it is.

Example 1



You can scan the QR code to hear the correct pronunciation.

In the above example, by following Rule 1:

Reading technique in Lepcha: Always start from the Chhyoming Aamoo letter ᰣ (*la*) and then move to the Thaambin ᰵ (*ee kup*).

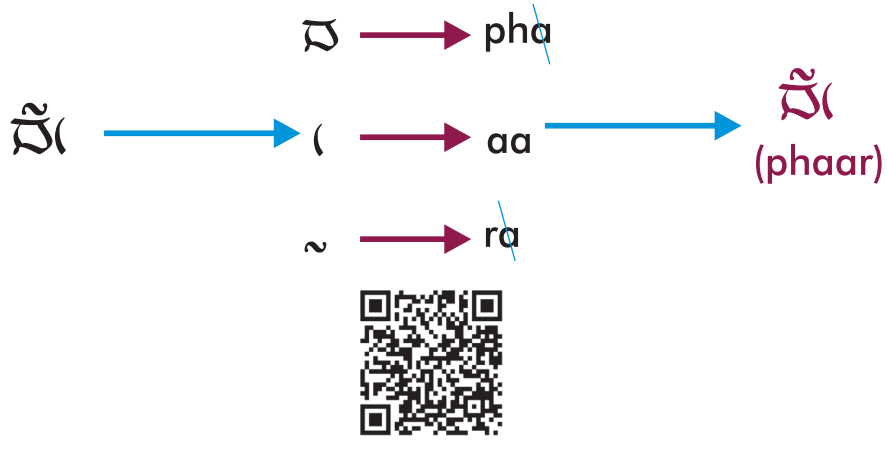
Reading & writing technique in English: The final '*a*' is omitted for the Chhyoming Aamoo letter ᰣ (*la*). For the Thaambin ᰵ (*ee kup*), we write the alphabetical expression '*ee*' as it is. Thus, the final word formed is ᰵᰣ (*lee*) which means "*house*" in the Lepcha language.

Rule 2

When a word is formed by combining a Chhyoming Aamoo letter, a Thaambin and a Tyelboo Thaambin, we follow the stepwise approach of forming Lepcha words as mentioned previously. Therefore, while reading and writing those words we need to start from the letter and then move to the Thaambin after which we move to the Tyelboo Thaambin. In this rule we will go in depth to understand the reading and writing techniques for the words that are formed by combining a Chhyoming Aamoo letter, a Thaambin and a Tyelboo Thaambin.

Reading & writing technique in Lepcha: Always start from the Chhyoming Aamoo letter and then move to the Thaambin and subsequently to the Tyelboo Thaambin.

Reading & writing technique in English: The final alphabet is omitted for the Chhyoming Aamoo letter. For the Thaambin, we write the alphabetical expression as it is. For the Tyelboo Thaambin, the final alphabet is omitted.



You can scan the QR code to hear the correct pronunciation.

In the above example, by using Rule 2:

Reading & writing technique in Lepcha: Always start from the Chhyoming Amoo letter ᰚ (*pha*) and then move to the Thaambin ᰦ (*aa kup*) and then to the Telboo Thaambin ᰵ (*ra tet*).

Reading & writing technique in English: The final '*a*' is omitted for the Chhyoming Aamoo letter ᰚ (*pha*). For the Thaambin ᰦ (*aa kup*), we write the alphabetical expression '*aa*' as it is. For the Tyelboo Thaambin ᰵ (*ra tet*), the final '*a*' is omitted.

Thus, the final word formed is ᰚᰦ (*phaar*) which means "*enlarge*" in the Lepcha language.

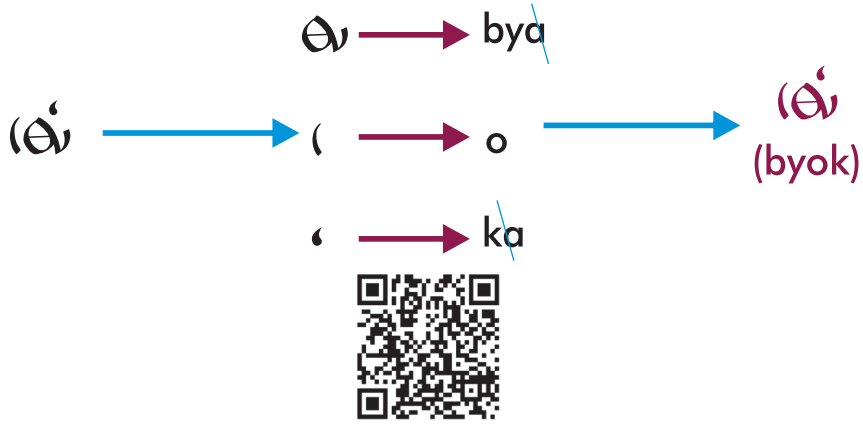
Rule 3

When a word is formed by combining a thyu letter, a Thaambin and a Tyelboo Thaambin, we have to follow the stepwise approach of forming Lepcha words as mentioned previously. Therefore, while reading and writing those words we need to start from the thyu letter and then move to the Thaambin after which we move to the Tyelboo Thaambin. In this rule, we will go in depth to understand the reading and writing techniques for the words that are formed by combining a thyu letter, Thaambin and a Tyelboo Thaambin.

Reading & writing technique in Lepcha: Always start from the thyu letter and then move to the Thaambin and subsequently to the Tyelboo Thaambin.

Reading & writing technique in English: The final alphabet is omitted for the thyu letter. For the Thaambin, we write the alphabetical expression as it is. Lastly, the final alphabet is omitted for the Tyelboo Thaambin.

Example 3



You can scan the QR code to hear the correct pronunciation.

In the above example, by using Rule 3:
Reading & writing technique in Lepcha : Always start from the thyu letter (bya), move to the Thaambin (*o kup*) and then to the Tyelboo Thaambin (*ka tet*)

Reading & writing technique in English : The final 'a' is omitted for the thyu letter (bya), for the Thaambin (*o kup*), we write the alphabetical expression as it is. Lastly, the final '*a*' is omitted for the Tyelboo Thaambin (*ka tet*) .

Thus, the final word is (byok) which means *'grass'* in the Lepcha language.

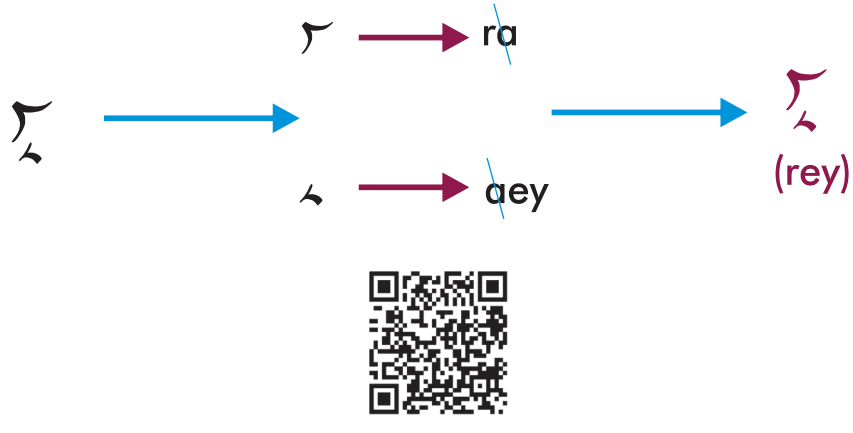
Rule 4 (exception)

When a word is formed by combining a Chhyoming Aamoo letter and the Thaambin ᰀ (*aey kup*), we follow the stepwise approach of forming Lepcha words as mentioned previously. Therefore, while reading and writing those words we need to start from the letter and then move to the Thaambin ᰀ (*aey kup*).In this rule we will go in depth to understand the reading and writing techniques for the words that are formed by combining a Chhyoming Aamoo letter and a Thaambin ᰀ (*aey kup*).

Reading & writing technique in Lepcha: Always start from the Chhyoming Aamoo letter and then move to the Thaambin.

Reading & writing technique in English: The final alphabet is omitted for the Chhyoming Aamoo letter. For the Thaambin ᰀ (*aey kup*), the initial '*a*' is omitted.

Example 4



You can scan the QR code to hear the correct pronunciation.

In the above example, by using Rule 4:

Reading & writing technique in Lepcha: Always start from the Chhyoming Aamoo letter ᰝ (*ra*) and then move to the Thaambin ᰀ (*aey kup*).

Reading & writing technique in English:: The final '*a*' is omitted for the Chhyoming Aamoo letter ᰝ (*ra*). For the Thaambin ᰀ (*aey kup*), the initial '*a*' is omitted.

Thus, the final word is ᰝᰛ (*rey*) which means *'wick'* in the Lepcha language.

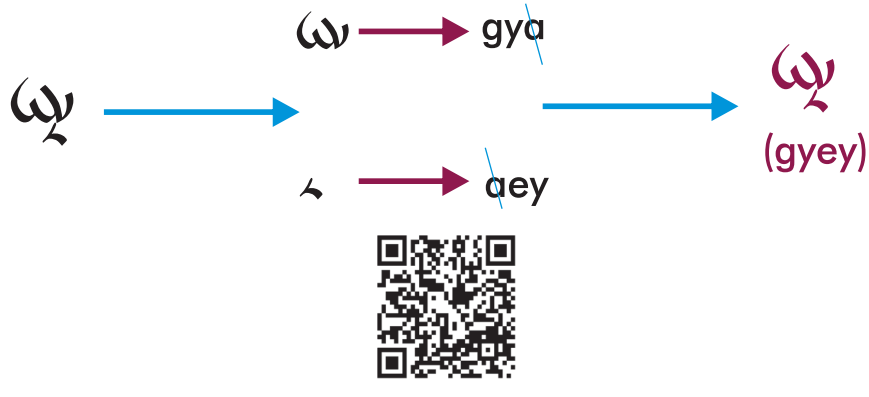
Rule 5 (exception)

When a word is formed by combining a thyu letter, and the Thaambin ᰶ (*aey kup*), we follow the stepwise approach of forming Lepcha words as mentioned previously. Therefore, while reading and writing those words we need to start from the thyu letter and then move to the Thaambin ᰶ (*aey kup*). In this rule we will go in depth to understand the reading and writing techniques for the words that are formed by combining a thyu letter and the Thaambin ᰶ (*aey kup*).

Reading & writing technique in Lepcha: Always start from the thyu letter and then move to the Thaambin ᰶ (*aey kup*).

Reading & writing technique in English: The final alphabet is omitted for the Chhyoming Aamoo letter. For the Thaambin ᰶ (*aey kup*), the initial '*a*' is omitted.

Example 5



You can scan the QR code to hear the correct pronunciation.

In the above example, by using Rule 5:

Reading & writing technique in Lepcha: Always start from the Chhyoming Aamoo letter ᰜ (*gya*) and then move to the Thaambin ᰶ (*aey kup*)

Reading & writing technique in English: The final '*a*' is omitted for the Chhyoming Aamoo letter ᰜ (*gya*). For the Thaambin ᰶ (*aey kup*), the initial '*a*' is omitted.

Thus, the final word is ᰜᰵᰶ (*gyey*) which means *'win'* in the Lepcha language.

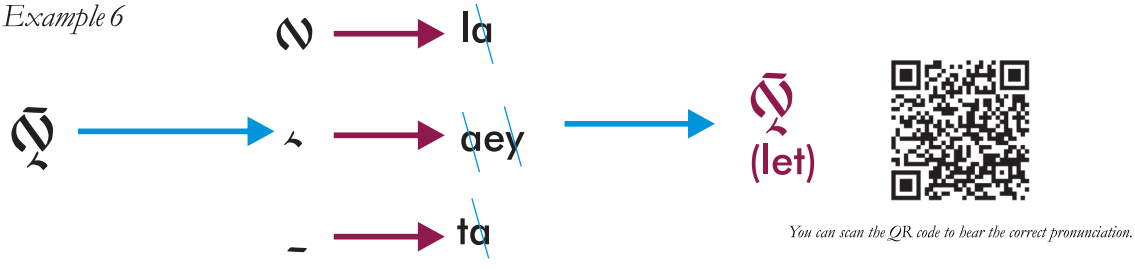
Rule 6 (exception)

When a word is formed by combining a Chhyoming Aamoo letter, theThaambin ᰛ (*aey kup*) and a Tyelboo Thaambin, we follow the stepwise approach of forming Lepcha words as mentioned previously. Therefore, while reading and writing those words we need to start from the Chhyoming Aamoo letter and then move to the Thaambin ᰛ (*aey kup*) after which we move to the Tyelboo Thaambin. In this rule we will go in depth to understand the reading and writing techniques for the words that are formed by combining a Chhyoming Aamoo letter, the Thaambin ᰛ (*aey kup*) and a Tyelboo Thaambin.

Reading & writing technique in Lepcha: Always start from the Chhyoming Aamoo letter and then move to the Thaambin ᰛ (*aey kup*) and subsequently to the Tyelboo Thaambin.

Reading & writing technique in English: The final alphabet is omitted for the Chhyoming Aamoo letter. For the Thaambin ᰛ (*aey kup*) the initial '*a*' and the final '*y*' are omitted. It is important to note that this is applicable only to the Thaambin ᰛ (*aey kup*). For the Tyelboo Thaambin, the final alphabet is omitted.

Example 6



You can scan the QR code to hear the correct pronunciation.

In the above example, by using Rule 6:

Reading & writing technique in Lepcha: Always start from the Chhyoming Amoo letter ᰣ (*la*) and then move to the Thaambin ᰛ (*aey kup*) and then to the Tyelboo Thaambin ᰻ (*ta tet*).

Reading & writing technique in English : The final '*a*' is omitted for the Chhyoming Aamoo letter ᰣ (*la*). For the Thaambin ᰛ (*aey kup*), the initial '*a*' and the final '*y*' are omitted. The final '*a*' is omitted for the Tyelboo Thaambin ᰻ (*ta tet*).

Thus, the final word is ᰣᰛ᰻ (*let*) which means '*change*' in the Lepcha language.

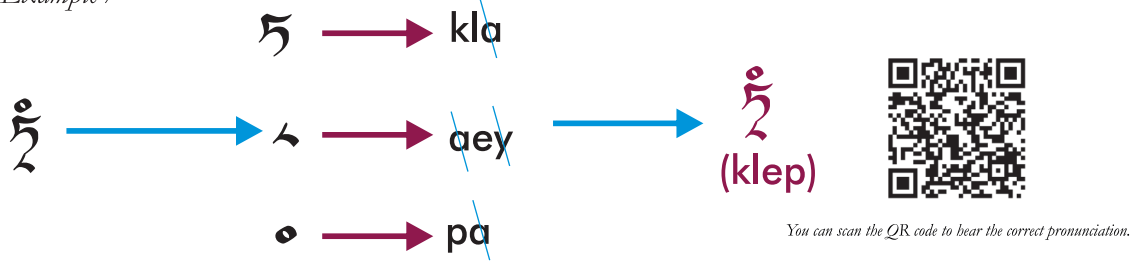
Rule 7 (exception)

When a word is formed by combining a thyu letter, the Thaambin ᰀ (*aey kup*) and a Tyelboo Thaambin, we follow the stepwise approach of forming Lepcha words as mentioned previously. Therefore, while reading and writing those words we need to start from the thyu letter and then move to the Thaambin ᰀ (*aey kup*) after which we move to the Tyelboo Thaambin. In this rule we will go in depth to understand the reading and writing techniques for the words that are formed by combining a thyu letter, the Thaambin ᰀ (*aey kup*) and a Tyelboo Thaambin.

Reading & writing technique in Lepcha: Always start from the thyu letter and then move to the Thaambin ᰀ (*aey kup*) and then to the Tyelboo Thaambin.

Reading & writing technique in English: The final alphabet is omitted for the thyu letter. For the Thaambin ᰀ (*aey kup*), the initial and final alphabets are omitted. It is important to note that this is applicable only to the Thaambin ᰀ (*aey kup*). For the Tyelboo Thaambin, the final alphabet is omitted.

Example 7



You can scan the QR code to hear the correct pronunciation.

In the above example, by using Rule 7:

Reading & writing technique in Lepcha : Always start from the thyu letter ᰍ(*kla*) and then move to the Thaambin ᰀ (*aey kup*) and then to the Tyelboo Thaambin ᰫ (*pa tet*).

Reading & writing technique in English : The final '*a*' is omitted for the thyu letter ᰍ (*kla*), For the Thaambin ᰀ (*aey kup*) the initial '*a*' and the final '*y*' are omitted. The final '*a*' is omitted for the Tyelboo Thaambin ᰫ (*pa tet*).

Thus, the final word is ᰍᰫᰧ (*klep*) which means *'join'* in the Lepcha language.

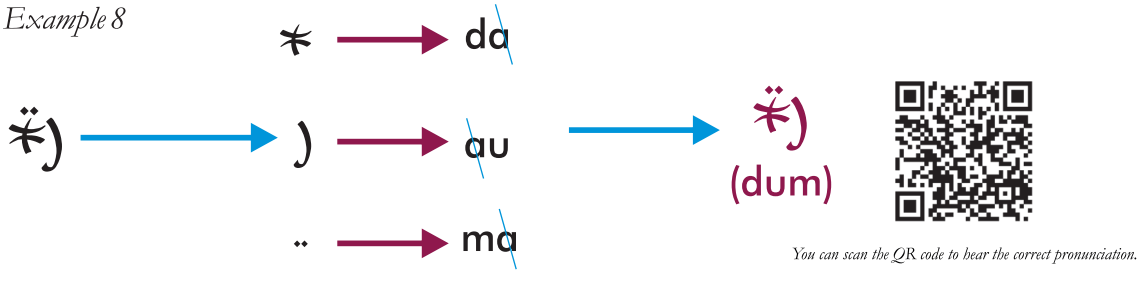
Rule 8 (exception)

When a word is formed by combining a Chhyoming Aamoo letter, the Thaambin ᰛ (*au kup*) and a Tyelboo Thaambin, we have to follow the stepwise approach of forming Lepcha words as mentioned previously. Therefore, while reading and writing those words we need to start from the letter and then move to the Thaambin ᰛ (*au kup*) after which we move to the Tyelboo Thaambin. In this rule we will go in depth to understand the reading and writing techniques for the words that are formed by combining a Chhyoming Aamoo letter, the Thaambin ᰛ (*au kup*) and a Tyelboo Thaambin.

Reading & writing technique in Lepcha: Always start from the Chhyoming Aamoo letter and move to the Thaambin ᰛ (*au kup*) and then to the Tyelboo Thaambin.

Reading & writing technique in English: The final alphabet is omitted for the Chhyoming Aamoo letter. For the Thaambin ᰛ (*au kup*), the initial '*a*' is omitted. It is important to note that this is applicable only to the Thaambin ᰛ (*au kup*). For the Tyelboo Thaambin, the final alphabet is omitted.

Example 8



You can scan the QR code to hear the correct pronunciation.

In the above example, by using Rule 8:

Reading & writing technique in Lepcha: Always start from the Chhyoming Amoo letter ᰣ (*da*) and then move to the Thaambin ᰛ (*au kup*) and then to the Tyelboo Thaambin ᰫ (*ma tet*).

Reading & writing technique in English: The final '*a*' is omitted for the Chhyoming Aamoo letter ᰣ (*da*) . For the Thaambin ᰛ (*au kup*), the initial '*a*' alphabet is omitted. The final '*a*' is omitted for the Tyelboo Thaambin ᰫ (*ma tet*).

Thus, the final word is ᰣᰛᰫ (*dum*) which means *'clothe'* in the Lepcha language.

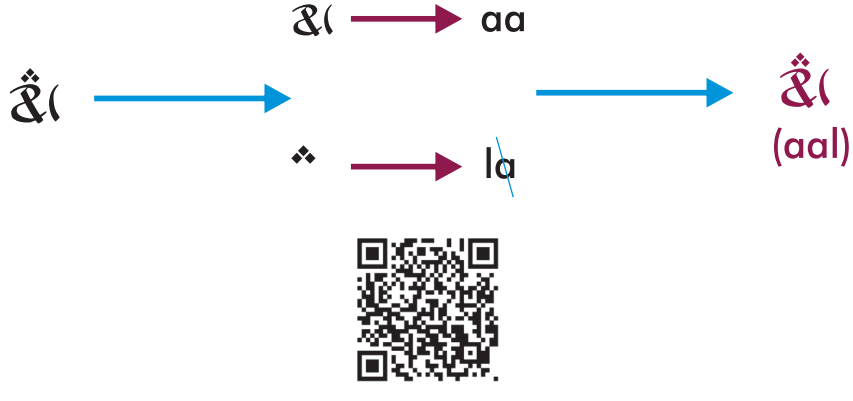
Rule 9

When a word is formed by combining a Chhyoming Aakup letter and a Tyelboo Thaambin, we follow the stepwise approach of forming Lepcha words as mentioned previously. Therefore, while reading and writing those words we need to start from the Chhyoming Aakup letter and then move to the Tyelboo Thaambin. In this rule we will go in depth to understand the reading and writing techniques for the words that are formed by combining a Chhyoming Aakup letter and a Tyelboo Thaambin.

Reading & writing technique in Lepcha: Always start from the Chhyoming Aakup letter and then move to the Tyelboo Thaambin.

Reading & writing technique in English: For the Chhyoming Aakup letter, we write the alphabetical expression as it is. It is important to note that this holds true for all Chhyoming Aakup letters. For the Tyelboo Thaambin, the final alphabet is omitted.

Example 9



You can scan the QR code to hear the correct pronunciation.

In the above example, by using Rule 9:

Reading & writing technique in Lepcha: Always start from the Chhyoming Aakup letter (*aa*) and then move to the Tyelboo Thaambin (*la tet*).

Reading & writing technique in English: For the Chhyoming Aakup letter (*aa*) we write the alphabetical expression '*aa*' as it is. The final '*a*' is omitted for the Tyelboo Thaambin (*la tet*).

Thus, the final word is (*aal*) which means '*new*' in the Lepcha language.

Rule 10

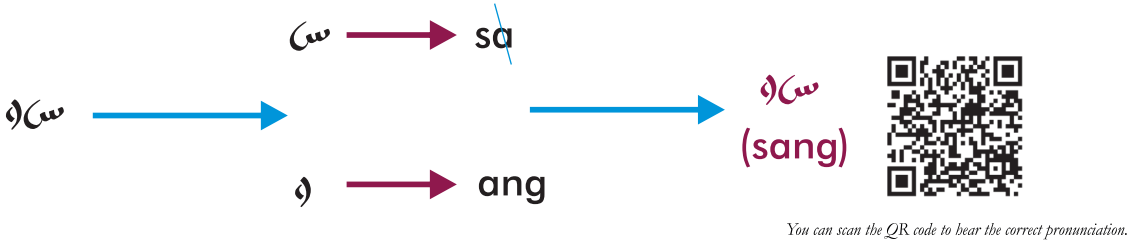
When a word is formed by combining a Chhyoming Aamoo letter and nindo ᰋᰤᰧ (*ang*), we follow the stepwise approach of forming Lepcha words as mentioned previously. Therefore, while reading and writing those words we need to start from the Chhyoming Aamoo letter and then move to nindo ᰋᰤᰧ (*ang*).

It is important to note that the nindo ᰋᰤᰧ (*ang*) is written and pronounced as '*ang*'. In this rule we will go in depth to understand the reading and writing techniques for the words that are formed by combining a Chhyoming Aamoo letter and nindo ᰋᰤᰧ (*ang*).

Reading & writing technique in Lepcha: Always start from the Chhyoming Aamoo letter and then move to nindo ᰋᰤᰧ (*ang*).

Reading & writing technique in English:: The final alphabet is omitted for the Chhyoming Aamoo letter. For nindo ᰋᰤᰧ (*ang*), we write the alphabetical expression '*ang*' as it is.

It is important to note that when a Chhyoming Aamoo letter combines with nindo ᰋᰤᰧ (*ang*) , no other Thaambin or Tyelboo Thambin are considered and at the same time, nindo ᰋᰤᰧ (*ang*) is always placed before the consonant letter.



You can scan the QR code to hear the correct pronunciation.

Reading & writing technique in Lepcha: Always start from the Chhyoming Aamoo letter ᰎᰧ (*sa*) and then move to nindo ᰋᰤᰧ (*ang*).

Reading & writing technique in English: The final '*a*' is omitted for the Chhyoming Aamoo letter ᰎᰧ (*sa*). For nindo ᰋᰤᰧ (*ang*), we write the alphabetical expression '*ang*' as it is.

Thus, the final word is ᰎᰧᰋᰤᰧ (*sang*) which means *'win'* in the Lepcha language.

Rule 11

When a word is formed by combining a Chhyoming Aakup letter ᰀ (*a*) and the ᰽ (*rantet*), the final word formed is written as ᰁ᰽ (*a*).

It is important to note that the alphabetical representation for ᰁ᰽ is also '*a*'. This is because if we write '*aa*' for ᰁ᰽, it would correspond to another Chhyoming Aakup letter ᰀᰤ (*aa*). Though both ᰀ and ᰁ᰽ have the same alphabetical representation i.e '*a*' assigned to represent them, they are different elements in the Lepcha language. Moreover, the latter ᰁ᰽ is pronounced as '*a*' with a rising intonation.



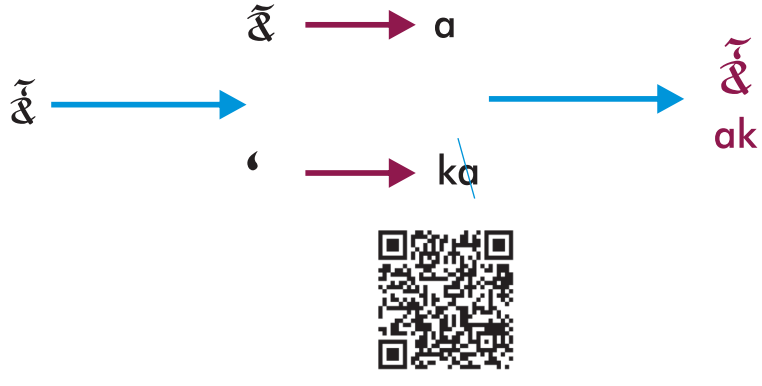
Rule 12

When a word is formed by combining a Chhyoming Aakup letter, ᰶ (*rantet*) and a Tyelboo Thaambin, we follow the stepwise approach of forming Lepcha words as mentioned previously. Therefore, while reading and writing those words we need to start from the of Chhyoming Aakup letter and then move to ᰶ (*rantyet*) after which we move to the Tyelboo Thaambin. In this rule we will go in depth to understand the reading and writing techniques for the words that are formed by combining a Chhyoming Aakup letter, ᰶ (*rantet*) and a Tyelboo Thaambin.

Reading & writing technique in Lepcha: Always start from the Chhyoming Aakup letter and then move to the ᰶ (*rantet*) and then to the Tyelboo Thaambin.

Reading & writing technique in English: According to Rule 11, the Chhyoming Aakup letter and the ᰶ (*rantet*) is written as '*a*'. The final alphabet is omitted for the Tyelboo Thaambin.

Example 12



You can scan the QR code to hear the correct pronunciation.

Reading & writing technique in Lepcha: Always start from the Chhyoming Aakup letter ᰛ (*a*) and then move to ᰶ (*rantet*) and then to the Tyelboo Thaambin ᰻ (*ka tet*).

Reading & writing technique in English: According to Rule 11, the Chhyoming Aakup letter ᰛ (*a*) and ᰶ (*rantet*) is written as '*a*'. The final '*a*' is omitted for the Thaambin ᰻ (*ka tet*).
Thus, the final word is ᰛᰶᰰ (*ak*) which means '*yes*' in the Lepcha language.

Rule 13

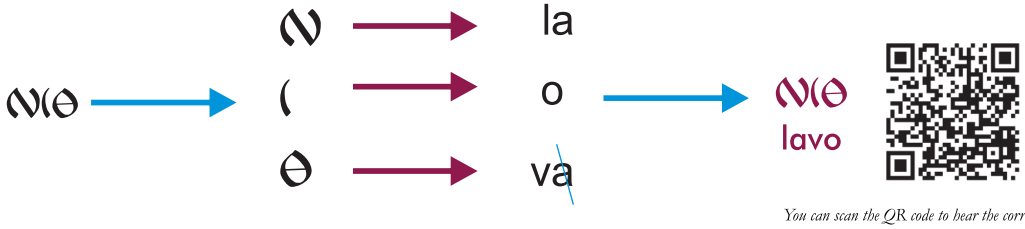
When a word is formed by combining two Chhyoming Aamoo letters and a Thaambin we follow the stepwise approach of forming Lepcha words as mentioned previously. In this case we need to start from the first Chhyoming Aamoo letter and then move to the second Chhyoming Aamoo letter and then to the Thaambin. In this rule we will go in depth to understand the reading and writing techniques for the words that are formed by combining two Chhyoming Aamoo letters and a Thaambin.

Reading & writing technique in Lepcha: Always start from the first Chhyoming Aamoo letter and then move to the second Chhyoming Aamoo letter and then to the Thaambin.

Reading & writing technique in English: The alphabets are considered as it is for the first Chhyoming Aamoo letter , for the Second Chhyoming Aamoo letter, the final alphabet is omitted. For the Thaambin, we write the alphabetical expression as it is.

Example 13

In the above example, by using Rule 12:



You can scan the QR code to hear the correct pronunciation.

Reading & writing technique in Lepcha:: Always start from the first Chhyoming Aamoo letter ᰜ (*la*) and move to the second Chhyoming Aamoo letter ᰟ (*va*) and then to the Thaambin ᰕ (*o kup*).

Reading & writing technique in English: For the first Chhyoming Aamoo letter ᰜ (*la*) we write the alphabetical expression '*la*' as it is. For the second Chhyoming Aamoo letter ᰟ (*va*), final '*a*' is omitted. For the Thaambin ᰕ (*o kup*), we write the alphabetical expression '*o*' as it is.

Thus, the final word formed is ᰜᰕᰟ (*lavo*) which means '*month*' in the Lepcha language.

Note: When a word is formed by combining two Chhyoming Aamoo letters and a Thaambin, the last letter doesn't end without a symbol hence Thaambin symbol is always considered for the last Chhyoming Aamoo letter.

INTRODUCTION TO LEPCHA GRAMMAR

Grammar reinforces a particular structure to a language allowing for the standardization of the communication system itself. Each language has its own rules that help in the delivery of correct speech and sentence formation. The Lepcha language is no different in this regard. This book introduces the basic parts of the speech along with other elements and guidelines that help in the construction of sentences in a correct and logical manner.

Articles

Articles are words that define a noun as definite or indefinite. Articles are called ᰛᰪᰮᰶ (*blongjyak*) in the Lepcha language.

Articles are distinguished into two types depending on how they modify the noun. They are definite articles and indefinite articles.

Definite Article: A definite article is called ᰎᰥᰮᰥᰮᰶᰒᰪ ᰛᰪᰮᰶ(*taaksyiknyimboo blongyak*) in the Lepcha language. The definite articles can be compared to the definite article 'the' of the English language. The functions of both are similar to their English counterparts and that they are used with a respective noun to define it as something specific.

In the Lepcha language, the definite articles are ᰪᰶ *(rey),* ᰪᰶᰭᰶ (*rem*) and ᰝᰪ *(mu)*. It is important to remember that all of the above three definite articles are always placed after the noun or the pronoun while constructing a sentence.

Uses of the Three Definite Articles:

ᰪᰶ (*rey*): The definite article ᰪᰶ (*rey*) is used to refer to a particular specific subject.

Examples of ᰪᰶ (*rey*)

- ᰚᰣᰣ ᰪᰶ (*pano rey*) means '*the king*'
- ᰣᰣᰐ ᰪᰶ (*lavo rey*) means '*the moon*'
- ᰣᰡᰶᰐ ᰪᰶ (*chhyo rey*) means '*the book*'
- ᰣᰪ ᰪᰶ ᰎᰥᰒᰪ ᰪᰮ (*go rey daokboo gum*) means '*I am the owner*'

ᰪᰶᰭᰶ (*rem*): The definite article ᰪᰶᰭᰶ (*rem*) is used primarily while addressing someone or while expressing a request.

Examples of ᰪᰶᰭᰶ (*rem*):

- ᰚᰣᰣ ᰪᰶᰭᰶ (*pano rem*) means '*to the king*'
- ᰣᰣᰚᰶᰭᰶ ᰪᰶᰭᰶ (*lopan rem*) means '*to the teacher*'
- ᰦᰣᰣ ᰚᰣᰣ ᰪᰶᰭᰶ ᰥᰮᰶ ᰝ (*hunu pano rem syoo ma*) means '*he petitioned to the king*'

•ᰵᰛᰶ (*mu*): The definite article ᰵᰛᰶ (*mu*) is used whenever there is a number associated with that particular sentence.

Example of ᰵᰛᰶ (*mu*)

•ᰣᰶ ᰵᰛᰶ ᰣᰶ ᰣᰶ ᰍᰬ (*kaat mu kaat kaa lee*) means '*The one said to the other*'

Indefinite Articles: An indefinite article is called ᰡᰍᰶᰛᰵᰍᰶᰣᰶᰐᰛᰶ ᰕᰬᰶᰮᰶ (*taaksyikmanyinboo blongjyak*) in the Lepcha language. This indefinite article can be compared to the indefinite articles 'a' and 'an' of the English language. The functions of the indefinite article is similar to that of its English counterparts and they are used with a noun that is not defined or specific.

In the Lepcha language, the indefinite article is ᰣᰶᰶ (*kaat*) This article is always placed after a noun or pronoun.

Examples of ᰣᰶᰶ (*kaat*) :

- ᰚᰥᰬᰶ ᰣᰶᰶ (*fa lyeng kaat*) means *'a young man'*
- ᰶᰛᰶ ᰣᰶᰶ (*doo kaat*) means '*an umbrella*'

Positive And Negative Statements

Just as seen in the English language, the sentences of the Lepcha language can also be categorized as positive and negative sentences. A positive sentence affirms a statement and a negative sentence rejects a statement. It is important to note that there is a particular way in which a statement becomes negative in the Lepcha language. Addition of ᰛ (*ma*) to a verb designates the statement as a negative statement. For positive sentences, there are no such additions and a statement is considered to be positive if there is no ᰛ (*ma*) with the verb in a sentence.

Examples:

Positive Statement	Negative Statement
ᰡᰴ (*rok*) means *'to read'*	ᰛᰡᰴ (*marok*) means *'don't read'*
ᰚᰠᰶ (*thaong*) means *'to drink'*	ᰛᰚᰠᰶ (*mathaong*) means *'don't drink'*
ᰡᰤᰶ (*lik*) means *'to shout'*	ᰛᰡᰤᰶ (*malik*) means *'don't shout'*

Note : The word ᰒᰶ (*ney*) doesn't have a meaning but it is generally used along with the negative words while forming a sentence. It is always used right after a negative word in a sentence.

Examples of ᰒᰶ (*ney*)*:*

- ᰛᰋᰣ ᰒᰶ (*mabo ney*) means *'don't give up'*
- ᰛᰚᰠᰶ ᰒᰶ (*mathaong ney*) means *'don't drink'*

Singular and Plural:

In the Lepcha language, the nouns are generally written as singular nouns denoting only one person, place, animal or a thing. To denote these nouns in the Lepcha language as plural, we use ᰛᰪ (*sang*) and ᰛᰒ (*pang*). These two cannot be used interchangeably as either of the two can be affixed with certain specific verbs. ᰛᰪ (*sang*) is used to denote the plural form of gods, goddesses, deities and human beings. ᰛᰒ (*pang*) is used to denote the plural form of animals birds and other inanimate things.

Examples of ᰛᰪ (*sang*)

Singular	Plural
ᰚᰧ (*rum*) means '*God*'	ᰚᰧᰛᰪ (*rumsang*) means '*gods*'
ᰚᰧᰡᰶᰭ (*rummit*) means '*goddess*'	ᰚᰧᰡᰶᰭᰛᰪ (*rummitsang*) means '*goddesses*'
ᰜᰧᰶᰒ (*lopan*) means '*teacher*'	ᰜᰧᰶᰒᰛᰪ (*lopansang*) means '*teachers*'
ᰡᰬᰶᰧ (*ryen*) means '*gentleman*'	ᰡᰬᰶᰧᰛᰪ (*ryensang*) means '*gentlemen*'
ᰡᰬᰶᰧᰮᰬ (*ryennyoo*) means '*lady*'	ᰡᰬᰶᰧᰮᰬᰛᰪ (*ryennyoosang*) means '*ladies*'

Examples of ᰛᰒ (*pang*)

Singular	Plural
ᰡᰬᰭ (*bik*) means '*chicken*'	ᰡᰬᰭᰛᰒ (*bikpang*) means '*chickens*'
ᰡᰬᰳ (*bik*) means '*cow*'	ᰡᰬᰳᰛᰒ (*bikpang*) means '*cows*'
ᰡᰧ (*lee*) means '*house*'	ᰡᰧᰛᰒ (*leepang*) means '*houses*'
ᰐᰧᰶᰬ (*koong*) means '*tree*'	ᰐᰧᰶᰬᰛᰒ (*koongpang*) means '*trees*'
ᰮᰬᰤᰬ (*nyoogoo*) means '*pen*'	ᰮᰬᰤᰬᰛᰒ (*nyoogoopang*) means '*pens*'

Examples of singular and plural for ᰜᰤ (*go*) and ᰦᰬ (*hu*)

Singular	Plural
ᰜᰤ (*go*) means 'I'	ᰍᰜᰶ / ᰍᰡᰮ (*kaayoo/kanyik*) means '*we*'
ᰦᰬ (*hu*) means '*he*'	ᰦᰬᰶ (*huyoo*) means '*they*'

Interrogative Sentence

An interrogative sentence is a type of sentence that asks a question, as opposed to sentences that make a statement, deliver a command or express an exclamation.

In Lepcha language there are certain words that are used to form the interrogative sentences. These interrogative words are called ᰀᰪᰮ ᰛᰧᰱᰵ (*aavet tshukpaot*) in the Lepcha language.

Following are the interrogative words with examples:

ᰛᰧ (*too*) means '*Who/Whose*'

Examples of ᰛᰧ (*too*):

- ᰍᰬ ᰛᰧ ᰎᰪ? (*hao too go*)*?* means '*Who are you?*'
- ᰪᰭ ᰀᰪᰮ ᰛᰧ ᰏᰪ ᰎᰪ? (*lee aarey too saa go*)*?* means '*Whose house is it?*'

ᰜᰧ (*syoo*) means '*What*'

Examples of ᰜᰧ (*syoo*):

- ᰍᰬ ᰜᰧ ᰋᰬ ᰐᰶᰫ? (*hao syoo zo baam*)*?* means '*What are you eating?*'
- ᰀᰁᰬᰏᰪ ᰀᰁᰪᰭᰪ ᰜᰧ ᰎᰪ? (*aadosaa aabryaang syoo go*)*?* means '*What is your name?*'

ᰏᰪᰭ /ᰏᰧᰭ (*sabaa/sabee*) means '*Where*'

Examples of ᰏᰪᰭ (*sabaa*) :

- ᰍᰬ ᰏᰪᰭ ᰑᰵ ᰓᰶᰫ? (*hao sabaa rok kaam*)*?* means '*Where do you study?*'
- ᰍᰬ ᰏᰪᰭ ᰒᰮ ᰓᰵ ᰎᰪ? (*hao sabaa naon det go*)*?* means '*Where are you going?*'

ꡏꡗꡀ (*sathaa*) means '*When*'

Examples of ꡏꡗꡀ (*sathaa*)

- ꡞꡊꡎꡆ ꡖꡎ ꡏꡗꡀ ꡎꡍꡎꡊ ꡁꡍ? (*rumzong lee sathaa lavoong syo*)*?* means '*When are you returning home ?*'

ꡏꡁꡎꡎ / ꡏꡁꡎꡎ (*salom / salo*) means '*How*'

Examples of ꡏꡁꡎꡎ / ꡏꡁꡎꡎ (*salom / salo*)

- ꡘꡆ ꡏꡁꡎꡎ / ꡏꡁꡎꡎ ꡁꡍ? (*hao salom/ salo go*)*?* means '*How are you?*'
- ꡅꡁꡎꡍꡍ ꡁꡔꡏ ꡏꡁꡎꡎ / ꡏꡁꡎꡎ ꡓꡁꡍꡍ ꡄꡊ ꡍꡁ? (*kaayoonu orey salom/ salo maatnu zuk syong*)*?* means '*How can we do that ?*'

ꡏꡏꡂ (*satet*) means '*How much*'

Note: satet is used when a certain quantity or value is associated with the sentence.

Example of ꡏꡏꡂ (*satet*)

- ꡝꡊꡍꡏꡏꡔ ꡁꡍ ꡏꡏꡂ ꡁꡍ? (*nyoogoosaarey gong satet go*)? means '*How much does this pen cost?*'
- ꡅꡁꡎ ꡁꡎꡁ ꡐꡐ ꡏꡏꡂ ꡖꡈ ꡁꡍ? (*kaayoo lyang tatsat satet nyee go*)? means '*How much time do we have?*'

ꡏꡔꡏ (*sarey*) means '*Which*'

Example of ꡏꡔꡏ *(sarey)*

- ꡖꡎ ꡘꡁꡍꡏꡁ ꡏꡔꡏ ꡁꡍ? (*lee aadosa sarey go?*) means '*Which is your house/ home?*'
- ꡏꡁꡆ ꡔꡏ ꡏꡊꡍꡍꡈ ꡏꡔꡏ ꡁꡍ? (*saraong rey sooknyim sarey go*?) means '*Which day is today?*'

Parts of a Speech

Noun:

A noun is a word that represents a person, place or thing. In the Lepcha language, a noun is called ᰛᰩᰵᰪ (*aablong*).

Examples of ᰛᰩᰵᰪ (*aablong*)*:*

1. ᰝᰩᰵᰮᰧᰪ (*daamsaang*) means *'Damsaang'*
2. ᰖᰩᰵᰧᰩᰵᰧ (*jaapaan*) means *'Japan'*
3. ᰛᰵᰜ (*oong*) means *'Water'*
4. ᰍᰭ (*chyao*) means *'Tea'*
5. ᰛᰩᰵᰎᰮ (*aazoam*) means *'Food'*
6. ᰐᰜ (*ngoo*) means *'Fish'*
7. ᰧᰪ (*fo*) means *'Bird'*
8. ᰧᰭ (*chhyo*) means *'Book'*
9. ᰪᰩᰱ (*lavo*) means *'Moon'*
10. ᰎᰜ (*tshu*) means *'Life'*
11. ᰯᰵᰥ (*rip*) means *'Flower'*
12. ᰯᰪ (*lee*) means *'House'*
13. ᰍᰵᰪ (*laom*) means *'Road'*

Pronoun:

A pronoun is a word that is used instead of a noun or noun phrase in a sentence. In the Lepcha language, a pronoun is called ᰛᰢᰤᰶ (*blonglam*).

Examples of ᰛᰢᰤᰶ (*blonglam*)*:*

1. ᰍᰪ (*go*) means '*I* '
2. ᰓᰬ (*hao*) means '*you* '
3. ᰁᰍᰵ (*kado*) means '*oneself* '
4. ᰀᰍᰵ (*aado*) means '*yourself* '
5. ᰀᰍᰵᰎᰍ (*aadosaa*) means '*your* '
6. ᰁᰎᰧᰶ (*kasum*) means '*to me* '
7. ᰀᰍᰵᰶ (*aadom*) means '*to you* '
8. ᰦᰶ (*hu*) means '*he /she* '
9. ᰦᰶᰵ (*hudo*) means '*herself / himself* '
10. ᰦᰶᰁ᰷ (*huyoo*) means '*they* '
11. ᰁᰎᰍ (*kasaa*) means '*my / mine* '
12. ᰁᰍ᰷ᰶ᰷ᰎᰍ (*kaayoosaa*) means '*ours* '
13. ᰀᰍᰬ (*aarey*) means '*this* '
14. ᰀᰍ᰷ᰶ (*aayoom*) means '*to you all*'
15. ᰁᰍᰵᰶ (*kadom*) means '*to oneself*'

Adjective:

Adjectives are words that describe the qualities or attributes of nouns in a sentence. In the Lepcha language, adjectives are called ᰚᰛᰩᰵ (*blonggyoo*)

Examples of ᰚᰛᰩᰵ (*blonggyoo*)*:*

1. ᰀᰑᰮᰶ (*aaker*) means *'useless'*
2. ᰛᰵᰩᰬᰑ (*ryoopaa*) means *'good'*
3. ᰦᰮᰵ (*broon*) means *'born again /reborn'*
4. ᰑᰶᰑ (*kaat*) means *'one'*
5. ᰀᰑᰬᰮᰶ (*aajyen*) means *'wrong'*
6. ᰀᰑᰠᰶᰠ ᰀᰑᰠᰶᰠ (*aadaok aadaok*) means *'very painful'*
7. ᰀᰑᰩᰮᰑ (*aagyaap*) means *'a lot'*
8. ᰀᰑᰮᰶᰜ (*aaklem*) means *'sweet'*
9. ᰀᰑᰮᰶᰛᰶᰮ (*aakrim*) means *'bitter'*
10. ᰀᰑᰛᰮᰶ (*aachyaor*) *means 'sour'*
11. ᰀᰑᰭᰵᰮ (*aaum*) means *'sweet'*
12. ᰀᰑᰪᰵᰟ (*aakhut*) means *'qualified'*
13. ᰀᰑᰯᰵᰮ (*aasoom*) means *'hot as chilly'*
15. ᰀᰑᰦᰮᰶ (*aahren*) means *'long'*
16. ᰀᰑᰑᰬᰵ (*aapok*) means *'short'*

Verb:

A verb is a word that denotes an action or a state of being in a sentence. In the Lepcha language, a verb is called ᰀᰎᰦᰮ (*aasyaop*)

Example of ᰀᰎᰦᰮ (*aasyaop*)*:*

1. ᰝᰮᰛ (*ngaan*) means *'sit'*
2. ᰚᰮ (*bo*) means *'give to me'*
3. ᰛᰮ (*bee*) means *'give to others'*
4. ᰎᰢᰶ (*thaong*) means *'drink'*
5. ᰚᰠ (*zo/thaa*) means *'eat'*
6. ᰝᰬ (*ngoo*) means *'sharpen'*
7. ᰠᰛ (*daa*) means *'sleep'*
8. ᰛᰧ (*lee*) means *'speak'*
9. ᰎᰱ (*chyaong*) means *'wash'*
10. ᰐᰮᰛ (*paar*) means *'buy/purchase'*
11. ᰎᰢᰶ(*klaong*) means *'send'*
12. ᰧᰬᰛᰠ(*lookding*) means *'stand up'*
13. ᰝᰶ (*ngak*) means *'look'*
14. ᰛᰐ (*pee*) means *'write'*
15. ᰜᰮᰛ (*hlaap*) means *'learn'*

Note: ᰚᰮ (*bo*) is used to address the 1st person and 2nd person while ᰛᰮ (*bee*)is used to address 3rd person in a sentence.

Adverb:

An adverb is a word or an expression that modifies a verb, adjective, another adverb, determiner, clause, preposition or sometimes, even the entire sentence. In the Lepcha language, an adverb is called ᰛᰶᰣᰪᰵ (*syaopgyoo*)

Examples of ᰛᰶᰣᰪᰵ (*syaopgyoo*)*:*

1. ᰀᰢᰶᰣᰪᰮ ᰍ (*aajyaom do*) means *'easily'*
2. ᰀᰐᰪᰁ (*aathaang*) means *'above'*
3. ᰑᰢᰛᰶᰣᰪᰮ (*kaat kaon*) means *'some place'*
4. ᰀᰢᰪᰣᰧ (*aabee*) means *'here'*
5. ᰐᰵᰪᰵ (*thool*) means *'up'*
6. ᰒᰶᰪᰢ ᰏᰶᰪᰢ (*gyaap saap*) means *'very thin'*
7. ᰐᰶᰪᰴᰶᰣᰪᰮ ᰍ (*tukfyaon do*) means *'horizontal'*
8. ᰀᰢᰢᰱᰮ (*aalom*) means *'this way'*
9. ᰬᰐᰢᰱᰮ ᰍ (*chyaalaong do*) means *'just now'*
10. ᰢᰱᰮ᰷ᰧᰶᰁ (*laom bek*) means *'midway'*
11. ᰐᰪᰶᰪᰶᰮ ᰍ (*raongjying do)* means *'always'*
12. ᰪᰪᰶᰵᰐᰢ (*runghaan*) means *'up hill'*
13 ᰐᰧᰐᰢ (*tobaa*) means *'above'*
14. ᰘᰱᰢ ᰘᰱᰢ (*malaak malaak*) means *'quickly*
15. ᰘᰶᰐᰢ (*maat*) means *'only'*

Preposition:

A preposition is a word that shows the relationship between a noun and pronoun and some other words or element in a sentence. They usually help in denoting a particular spatial relationship of a noun. They denote a specific time, direction or even sometimes introduce an object in a sentence. In the Lepcha language a preposition is called ᰕᰛᰦᰶᰩᰵ (*blongthyu*)

Examples of Prepositions:

1. ᰨᰵᰫ (*dep*) means *'with'*
2. ᰍᰶ (*kaa*) means *'in, to, on, at, upon, for '*
3. ᰎᰶ (*saa*) means *'of'*
4. ᰨᰬ (*ber*) means *' in between'*
5. ᰘᰵᰬᰶ (*nahaan*) means *'before'*
6. ᰍᰵᰬᰘᰩ (*kaon nu*) means *'through'*
7. ᰎᰜᰶ (*sagraam*) means *'under '*
8. ᰛᰎᰵᰫᰵ (*saongtet*) means *'till '*
9. ᰕᰦ (*zong*) means *'like '*
10. ᰐᰶ (*baan*) means *'after '*
11. ᰘᰵᰩ (*nun*) means *'by'*
12. ᰪᰣᰐᰶ (*leebaa*) means *'say so '*
13. ᰣᰬ (*lom*) means *'from '*
14. ᰨᰵᰩᰍᰶ (*dunkaa*) means *'front'*
15. ᰎᰛᰟ (*sagaong*) means *'inside '*
16. ᰍᰎᰩ (*kasum*) means *'to me'*
17. ᰫᰵ (*tet*) means *'till, untill '*
18. ᰀᰍᰨ (*aazut*) means *'besides'*

Conjunctions:

Conjunctions are words that joins two sentences together. In the Lepcha language, a conjunction is called ᰛᰥᰦᰮᰧᰶ (*ringsyok*)

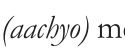
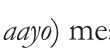
Examples of ᰛᰥᰦᰮᰧᰶ (*ringsyok*)*:*

1. ᰃᰦᰣ / ᰃᰦᰪ (*aan/aun*) means *'and'*
2. ᰮᰶᰦᰣᰣ (*syenlaa*) means *'however/yet/nevertheless'*
3. ᰮᰧᰶᰛᰣᰣᰧᰦᰵᰧᰶᰵ (*syoomaatnugongney*) means *'because'*
4. ᰍᰧᰦᰵᰧ (*kagang*) means *'if cooked'*
5. ᰲᰦᰣ (*tachyaa*) means '*before*'
6. ᰧᰦᰣᰣᰧᰵ (*yaangna*) means *'either'*
7. ᰮᰶᰦᰵ (*syen*) means *'but'*
8. ᰣᰦᰣᰬᰧᰦᰵᰧ (*olomgang*) means *'if so'*
9. ᰣᰶᰦᰵ (*len*) means *'than'*
10. ᰍᰪᰦᰣᰣ (kadubaa) means *'while cooking'*
11. ᰃᰦᰣ (*gaan*) means *'if'*

Interjections:

Interjections are words intended to express an exclamation or different levels of emotion or surprise. Since the Lepcha language is a is very heavy in phonetic intonation, interjections play a very important part in everyday Lepcha speech. In the Lepcha language an interjection is called  (*ring saaktalo*)

Examples of Interjections:

1.  *(aa – aa)* means *'expression of pain'*
2.  *(maa)* means *'expression of not wanting/ refusal'*
3.  *(aachyo)* means *'expression of pain/pinch'*
4.  *(aayo*) means *'expression of body ache'*
5.  *(haa)* means *'responding of call'*
6.  *(aapopo*) means *'wonder'*
7. *(aachhyik)* means *'exclamation or expression of disgust*
8.  *(baa)* means *'let me'*
9. *(aatsay)* means *'expression of surprise'*
10. *(aachhyoo)* means *'expression of cold'*
11.  *(rumma rumma)* means *'my Lord / expressing in sorrow or surprise'*
12.  *(aachyooley)* means *'expression of praise/joy (hurray, bravo)'*
13.  *(aottadapaol)* means *'expression of fright/terror'*
14. *(akmo)* means *'Oh Yes! Expression of knowing reality'*

Tenses

Tenses are usually manifested using specific forms of verbs, particularly in their conjugation patterns. In simple terms, tenses enable the reader to indicate whether the respective sentence, along with its verb, is an action in the present, past or future. The main tenses found in many languages include the past, present, and future. This is true even for the Lepcha language and the tenses in the same can be categorized as twelve types as mentioned below.

Present Tense (syo):

To denote a sentence in the present tense, we use the word  (*syo*).

Example:  - I go home.

Present Continuous Tense (baam):

To denote a sentence in the present continuous tense, we use the word  (*baam*) or (waam).

Example:  - I am going.

 - Dog is barking..

Present Perfect Tense (faat):

To denote a sentence in the present perfect tense, we use the word  (*faat*).

Example:  – I have gone.

Present Perfect Continuous Tense (dettaam):

To denote a sentence in the present perfect continuous tense, we use the word  (*dettaam*).

Example:  – I have been going.

Past Tense (ma):

To denote a sentence in the past tense, we use the word  (*ma*).

Example:  – I went.

Past Continuous Tense (baam ma):

To denote a sentence in the past tense, we use the word ꀀꀀ (*baamma*).

Example: ꀀꀀꀀꀀ - I was going.

Past Perfect Tense (thonyee):

To denote a sentence in the past perfect tense, we use the word ꀀꀀ (*thonyee*).

Example: ꀀꀀꀀꀀ - I had gone.

Past Perfect Continuous Tense (dettaam ma):

To denote a sentence in the past perfect continuous tense, we use the word ꀀꀀ (*dettaam ma*).

Example: ꀀꀀꀀꀀ - I had been going.

Future Tense (syo):

To denote a sentence in the future tense, we use the word ꀀ (*syo*).

Example: ꀀꀀꀀ – I will go.

Future Continuous Tense (baam syo):

To denote a sentence in the future continuous tense, we use the word ꀀꀀ (*baam syo*).

Example: ꀀꀀꀀꀀ – I shall be going.

Future Perfect Tense (ngoon syo):

To denote a sentence in the future perfect tense, we use the word ꀀꀀ (*ngoon syo*).

Example: ꀀꀀꀀꀀꀀ – I shall have gone.

Future Perfect Continuous Tense (dettaam syo):

To denote a sentence in the future perfect continuous tense, we use the word ꀀꀀ (*dettaam syo*).

Example: ꀀꀀꀀꀀ – I shall have been going.

Sentence Structural Format

It is true for every language that for a sentence to have logic and make meaningful sense, the words have to be placed in an orderly manner depending upon the rules of the particular language that is used to form that sentence. This holds true for the Lepcha language as well and that it too has a specific word order. To execute a correct sentence in the Lepcha language, the *'subject'* is written first followed by the *'object'* and then the *'verb'*. Contrary to the English language, the verb is always placed at the end of the sentence.

Example 1

ᰛᰪ ᰍᰧ ᰚᰛᰨ (*go chyee mathong*) - I don't drink beer.

In the above sentence:

ᰛᰪ (*go*)-I (*subject*)

ᰍᰧ (*chyee*)-beer (*object)*

ᰚᰛᰨ (*mathong*) - don't (*verb*)

Example 2

ᰋᰛᰍ ᰛᰣᰣᰨ ᰵᰛ ᰐᰛ (*kaayoo raongring hlaap baam*) - We are learning Lepcha language.

In the above sentence:

ᰋᰛᰍ (*kayo*) - we (*subject*)

ᰛᰣᰣᰨ (*raongring*) -Lepcha language(*object*)

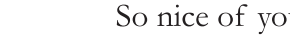
ᰵᰛ ᰐᰛ (*hlaap baam*) - learning (*verb*)

INTRODUCTION TO LEPCHA CONVERSATION

Greetings

1. Hello/ Hi
2. Good morning
3. Good night
4. Thank you
5. You welcome
6. Happy New Year
7. Good bye
8. Well done
9. Happy birthday
10. Good day
11. Good luck
12. See you again
13. Congratulations

Exclamatory Sentences

1. What a tasty food !
- 
2. Happy New Year !
- 
3. What a lovely flowers it is!
- 
4. What a beautiful place!
-
5. How sad!
- 
6. What a Melodious voice!
- 
7. Thanks a lot!
- 
8. So nice of you
- 
9. Hurray! We have done it!
- 
10. By grace of God
- 
11. Hello! How are you?
- 
12. Bravo! A nice kick.
- 
13. Pooh! What a dirty place.
- 
14. Hush! The baby is asleep.
- 

15. Wow! What a beautiful scenery.

- ᰛᰥᰧ᰻! ᰍᰬᰤ᰻ ᰘᰧᰮᰤ᰻ ᰛᰧᰤ᰻ ᰧᰍᰧ

16. Sukmit sing a Lepcha song!

- ᰍᰬᰧᰬᰤ᰻ ᰧᰮ ᰄᰤ᰻ ᰄᰧ᰻ ᰧᰧ᰻ ᰧᰧ!

17. Ouch! You are stepping on my foot.

- ᰛᰧᰧ᰻! ᰋᰮᰤ᰻ ᰄᰍᰧ ᰛᰧᰮᰥᰧᰧ᰻ ᰄᰬᰧ ᰶ

18. Wow! The magic was amazing.

- ᰘᰧᰛᰤ᰻! ᰧᰤ᰻ ᰥᰬᰤ᰻ ᰵ᰻ ᰧᰤ᰻ ᰧᰛ᰻ ᰘᰧ ᰧᰘ᰻ ᰶ

19. Oh no! my pet dog is sick!

- ᰶᰧ ᰄᰍᰧ ᰄᰘᰤ᰻ ᰄᰧᰤ᰻ ᰋᰬᰤᰧ ᰧᰤ᰻ ᰶ!

20. Yikes! there is a snake in the room.

- ᰛᰥᰬᰧᰤ᰻! ᰋᰧᰤᰧ ᰧᰘᰄ ᰧᰬᰄ ᰧᰤ᰻ ᰶ

Imperative Sentences

1. Do your own work.
- 
2. Close the window.
- 
3. Close the door.
- 
4. Go to bed.
- 
5. Sit down.
- 
6. Listen to me.
- 
7. Friends, please come inside.
- 
8. Bring my umbrella here.
- 
9. Keep to the left.
- 
10. Do not tell a lie.
- 
11. Listen to your teacher.
- 
12. Please wait for us.
- 
13. My dog is sick.
- 
14. Take off your dirty clothes.
- 

15. Please clean your room.

- 

16. Eat your food.

- 

17. Go upstairs.

- 

Interrogative Sentences

1. Where are you going?
- ᰓᰮ ᰛᰬᰵ ᰓᰬᰶᰭ ᰛᰬ?
2. What did you eat?
- ᰓᰮᰬᰶ ᰚᰵ ᰓᰧᰶᰛ ᰛᰬ?
3. What is happening here?
- ᰔᰬᰵ ᰚᰵ ᰔᰬᰶᰮ ᰐᰮ?
4. Are you going to shop today?
- ᰛᰧᰮ ᰓᰮ ᰓᰮᰐᰬᰵᰭᰧ ᰓᰬᰶᰭ?
5. What are you doing here?
- ᰓᰮ ᰔᰬᰐᰬ ᰚᰵ ᰠᰵᰧᰶ ᰛᰬ?
6. Why did you do that?
- ᰓᰮᰬᰶ ᰔᰮᰛ ᰚᰵᰐᰮᰬ ᰠᰵ ᰡ ᰬᰵ?
7. Did you finish your work?
- ᰓᰮᰬᰶ ᰉᰧᰛᰬ ᰔᰶ ᰬᰬᰶᰭ ᰍᰬ?
8. Where are you from?
- ᰓᰮ ᰛᰬᰬᰵᰭ ᰛᰬ?
9. What is the time?
- ᰉᰵᰵᰮ ᰛᰮᰶ ᰶᰵ ᰞ?
10. Do you need anything else?
- ᰔᰬᰧ ᰚᰵᰭᰬ ᰡᰶ ᰔᰬᰮᰶ ᰉᰵ ᰬᰮ?
11. How are you?
- ᰓᰮ ᰛᰬᰭ ᰛᰬ?
12. Why are you studying Raongring {Lepcha Language}
- ᰓᰮ ᰚᰵᰐᰮᰬ ᰛᰮᰵᰮ ᰬᰮ ᰧᰶ ᰬᰶ?
13. What is this?
- ᰔᰬᰮ ᰚᰵ ᰛᰬ?
14. Do you like to participate in archery competition?
- ᰔᰬᰧ ᰛᰵᰐᰮ ᰭᰶᰉᰵ ᰔᰬᰉᰵ ᰭᰬᰵᰉ ᰵᰮ ᰐᰬ ᰛᰉ?

15. Where do you live?

- [illegible] ?

16. Have you done your work?

- [illegible] ?

17. Is he really a poor man?

- [illegible] ?

18. Do you walk daily in the morning?

- [illegible] ?

19. Are you a Lepcha?

- [illegible] ?

20. Why are you so late?

- [illegible] ?

21. When did you see him?

- [illegible] ?

22. Which is your house?

- [illegible] ?

23. How old is your father?

- [illegible] ?

24. Do you like tea?

- [illegible] ?

25. Have you made the mistake?

- [illegible] ?

26. Will you help me?

- [illegible] ?

27. Are you taking rest?

- [illegible] ?

28. Is your father coming today?

- [illegible] ?

29. Tell me, why are you weeping?

- [illegible] ?

30. When are they coming?

- 

31. Why are you vexing me?

- 

32. Where are you coming from?

- 

33. Why are you spending so much?

- 

34. Is it raining in Kalimpong?

- 

Declarative Sentences

1. It is a beautiful day.
- 
2. I am youngest amongst brother.
- 
3. Mother is calling you.
- 
4. I like to play.
- 
5. Chyoomit is my friend.
- 
6. You have to play.
- 
7. My name is Aasyel Oongrip..
- 
8. I went to the shop today.
- 
9. The cat is on the tree.
- 
10. The sun rises every morning.
- 
11. I am tired.
- 
12. I love teaching Lepcha language.
- 
13. We started to go for Delhi.
- 
14. The sun rises from the east.
- 

15. They will obey my order.

•

16. Nobody was present there.

•

17. I have not seen the Taj Mahal.

•

18. The door key is not with me.

•

19. He has nothing to say.

•

20. He does not carry bag.

•

21. Passang is a good football player.

•

22. He is a good leader.

•

23. I am travelling to India.

•

24. This book is good.

•

25. Mayelmit is a good dancer.

•

SHORT SENTENCES IN LEPCHA LANGUAGE

Short Sentences

1. A month ago	
2. Alright	
3. All is well	
4. Anyway	
5. Ask someone else	
6. Bring him	
7. Cup of tea	
8. Come after a while	
9. Come home	
10. Do it now ?	
11. Don't ignore it	
12. Don't be alone	
13. Do it	
14. Don't do it	
15. Don't be late	
16.Drop it	
17. Don't make me angry	
18. Don't hide	
19. Don't fight	
20. Go there	
21. How is it?	
22. He must know	
24. How is he ?	

25. How wonderful 

26. He must know 

27. I ate 

28. I got it 

29. I saw it 

30. It helps 

31. It hurts 

32. It works 

33. It's his /her 

34. It's ours 

35. It's hot 

36. It's new 

37. I knew it 

38. I like it/ I love it 

39. I need it 

40. I ignore it 

41. Is it bad? 

42. It is pretty good 

43. Is it near ? 

44. Is it new ? 

45. It is old. 

46 Is it you? 

47. It rained 

48. It snowed 

49. It is true

50. It's too late

51.Its me

52.Its good

53. I did it

54. I am

55. Its yours

56. I won't go

57. In the beginning

58. I can't

59. I don't know what to do

60. Keep it

61.Leave it

62. Listen carefully

63. Look at me

64. Not now

65. No means no

66. No way

67. No never

68. Next time

69. Open the door

70. Recently

71. Really?

72. Right now

73. Stop it 

74. Tie your hair 

75. This is mine

76. Tell me 

77. Tell the truth 

78. There is no way 

79. Take bath 

80. Talk to me 

81. This is useless 

82. Try again 

83. Why don't you tell me 

84. What a shame 

85. What he said is true 

86. What to say ? 

87. What to do ? 

88. What to ask ? 

89. Yes it's me 

90. You must do it 

I joined the Rongring Global Lepcha Language Online course to refresh my Lepcha after not using the language for a few years. The classes were well structured and build the base required to successfully master the language. Looking back, I wish such a course had existed when I started learning Lepcha as a student.

Dr. Jenny Bentley
Associated researcher, ISEK Ethnologie,
University of Zürich

Being born into a Lepcha family, I had made previous attempts at learning Lepcha Language, through whatever limited sources were accessible. It was all very confusing, and even intimidating. When I joined the first batch of the Rongring Global Language Online course, I found it was not at all difficult. Thanks to this wonderful online course, which I attended from North America and India, I am now quite confident in reading and writing Lepcha. This course has now made me competent enough to pursue further study of Lepcha language on my own.

Dr. J. S. Simick
Retired Surgeon

Rongring is a wonderful platform for learning the least studied but at least nominally often heard-of language in my country, because of the half century-long controversy on the origin of the Japanese.Studying this small minority language gives me great inspiration for research and refreshed worldview.

Dr. Takenori Murakami
Kyoto University, Researcher



About the Author

Ryen Gideon Taso Lepcha is an IT professional born and brought up in Bom Busty, a small village in Kalimpong. He completed his B.tech in Electronics and Communication Engineering and earned an MBA degree from Faculty of Management Studies (FMS), Delhi. Rongring Global Lepcha Language Online course was founded by him which has now been taken over by the Rongring Lepcha Culture & Welfare Society.

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