Feedback on L2/16-380

Sarabveer Singh – December 13th, 2016

The feedback in L2/16-380 wants the wants 0A75 YAKASH to stay the same not be changed as L2/16-294 proposes:

I have a few counter arguments to the points noted in the feedback:

1. The Gurmukhi script was established mainly for use in Sikh Scriptures.
   a. Yes, the Gurmukhi Script was mainly made for Sikh Scriptures, but many changes have been made to the Gurmukhi Script. For example, the inclusion of letters with the BINDI added to them to represent sounds not made with the old set of Gurmukhi Letters. (Example: 0A5B GURMUKHI LETTER ZA) These characters never existed during the time the SGGS was originally compiled.
2. For Sikhs, the preservation of their scripture in their original form is essential.
   a. Nothing new other than the glyph being changed is being proposed, the glyph will still make the small "Ya" sound as it has always done. This glyph change will also help Sikhs in general since the current 0A75 YAKASH as of Unicode 9 resembles a 0A51 GURMUKHI SIGN UDAAT to most readers of Gurmukhi Unicode and Sikh Scriptures. Unless they are specifically told this, the readers will not produce the small "Ya" sound and skip it altogether. The Glyph Change would show normal Gurmukhi readers that the Yakash is supposed to Produce the small "Ya" sound as it is a Parin Yaiyha or Mini Version of 0A2F GURMUKHI LETTER YA, which makes a "Ya" sound.
3. Changing the YAKASH to the author's proposed version will push Sikhs away from using Unicode for their scriptures. In fact, they are already constrained to using ASCII fonts for their scriptures due to some other issues with Unicode, changes for which will be addressed in the near future.
   a. Many Sikhs I personally know and on various online forums and messaging groups have complained about this issue for a long time. Many Sikhs have modified the ASCII fonts for Gurmukhi to include the YAKASH as shown in the Proposal. The ASCII font used in L2/16-294 uses one of those modified ASCII fonts.

In L2/16-294, I have shown various examples of the proposal YAKASH being used. All these examples are related to the SGGS. Attestation 1 is a Pothi, or Book with excerpts from the Sikh Scriptures. Attestations 2-5 are from Sikh Gurbani Grammar and Knowledge Books. Attestations 1-5 are using the new proposed YAKASH, because it more properly represents the YAKASH. Even AnmolUni by Kulbir S. Thind (The Person who helped write the original Gurmukhi Unicode Proposal and created the GurbaniCD, which had one of the first typed up SGGS copies) uses the new Yakash in the AnmolUni Font, I will provide a picture in the attestations, but you can download the Unicode font yourself from gurbanifiles.org (Run by Kulbir S. Thind) and check the Glyph for 0A75 YAKASH by yourself.

The YAKASH in the original SGGS and current Printed Versions of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib use the old version of the YAKASH, which as stated in L2/16-294, is from handwriting. The old Yakash makes sense in Handwriting, but with the advent of modern printing and computerized typing, many people are now using the new Yakash, as it represents the Yakash more properly than a Hook used in Handwriting.

The SGPC has not reviewed or Audited the SGGS Copy It Prints in over 20 Years, that is why SGPC are still using the old Yakash from whatever font they use to print.

Attestations

AnmolUni by Kulbir S. Thind Font downloaded from gurbanifiles.org using the new Yakash.
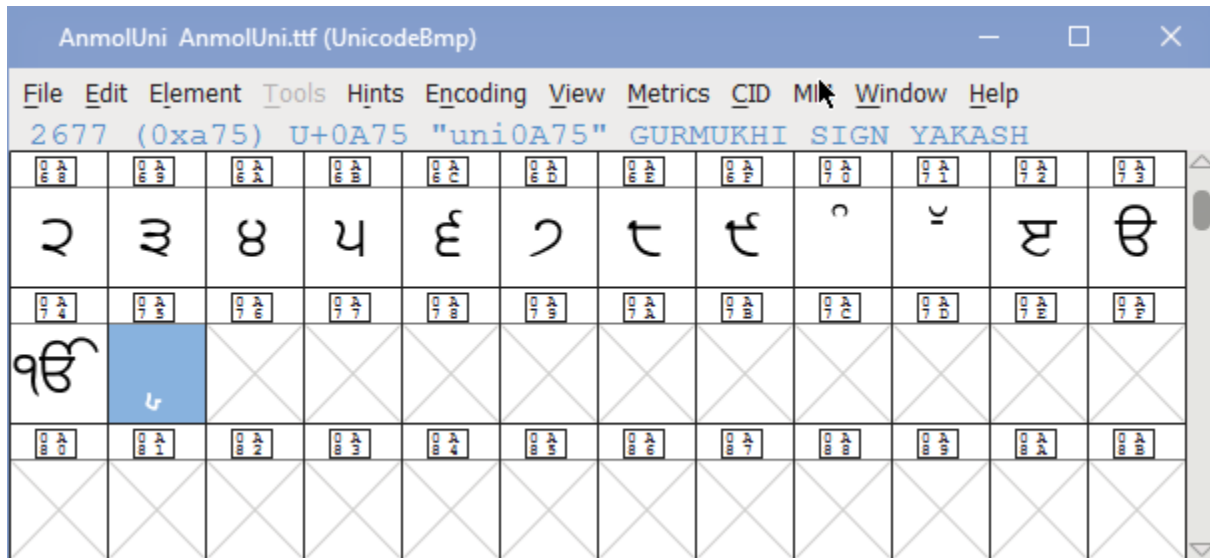
In Summary

The new Yakash does not push Sikhs away from Unicode and it does not ruin the original form of the SGGS as the new Yakash still produces the same small "Ya" sound. SGPC has not updated its printed version of SGGS for over 20 years and Old Handwritten Copies of SGGS use the old Yaskash because as I stated, it was suited for Handwriting. The issue here isn't how the Glyph looks; the issue is that as I stated that most readers who read Gurmukhi skip the pronunciation of the Yakash unless they are told to do so because it resembles a 0A51 GURMUKHI SIGN UDAAT. By correct Pronunciation standards, the new Yakash promotes the correct Pronunciation than the Old Hook design.