

Chapter-X

Basic orthography

Lesson-1: Clusters in writing system

Rule-1: Word initial and syllable initial two consonant letters are written as a cluster. For examples- फ्राम, स्रेम, द्लाम, ज्रोम, फ्लाम, खामफ्लाइ (खाम.फ्लाइ), हांखाय (हां.खाय), खांखाइ (खां.खाइ), गुंघ्राइ (गुं.घ्राइ), सुज्राइ (सु.ज्राइ), हांघ्राय (हां.घ्राय), संघ्राइ (सं.घ्राइ), सान्द्रि (सान.द्रि), गुन्थुथ्रि (गुन.थु.थ्रि), फोर्मान (not फोरमान), etc. (‘.’ indicates the syllable boundary.)

Rule-2: In case of a multisyllabic root, the coda of the preceding syllable and the onset consonant of the following syllable are written as a cluster. e.g, जाम्फाइ (जाम.फाइ), मोस्रोम (मोस.रोम), सोद्रोम (सोद.रोम), बाग्दाव (बाग.दाव), हाथखि (हा.थर.खि), etc.

But, in case of derived words or stems, the neighbouring consonants do not form clusters. For examples- थुनलाइ (not थुन्लाइ), खनथाइ (not खन्थाइ) खामसालि (not खाम्सालि), खिखरसालि (not खिखर्सालि), मोनसा (not मोन्सा), अनजिमा (not अन्जिमा), रिमोनला (not रिमोन्ला), etc.

Note: The suffix {-सालि} which means ‘place’ when co-occurs with a root, doesnot change its graphical form.

Rule-3: Regardless of the position and syllabic boundary co-occurring three consonant in a root word, if the final consonant is ‘र’ then it should be a three letters consonant cluster. For examples- सान्द्रि (swim), सान्थ्रि, मन्थ्रि, खुम्ब्रा, जुम्ब्रा, गुन्द्रा, गोम्ब्रि, खान्द्रि, आन्ज्राय, साखन्द्रा, साम्ब्राम, etc.

Rule-4: If suffixes with onset consonant clusters ‘ख’, ‘ग्र’, ‘ज्र’, ‘थ्र’, ‘द्र’, ‘फ्र’, ‘ब्र’ and ‘स्र’ co-occur with roots or stems ending in consonants, then the ending consonants will not combine with the above two letter clusters to form three letter clusters. For examples-

सान + {-स्रि} → सानस्रि (thought)	गार + {-ज्राब} → गारज्राब
सुं + {-ख्रां} → सुंख्रां	खार + {-ग्रो} → खारग्रो
सोम + {-ब्र} → सोमब्र	खाम + {-फ्राम} → खामफ्राम
सान + {-थ्र} → सानथ्र	फोन + {-द्राय} → फोनद्राय

Rule-5: Both the sequences- ‘ननानै’ and ‘न्नानै’ are simultaneously used as in होननानै/होन्नानै, साननानै/सान्नानै, फोराननानै/फोरान्नानै, etc. The latter may be followed.

Lesson-2: इ vs य and उ vs व

Rule-1: All the non-verb roots with oi/ai and iu/ao diphthong endings end in 'इ' and 'उ' respectively. For examples- गाहाइ (main), मालाइ (other), बिलाइ (leaf), फिथाइ (fruits), हाथाइ (tooth/market), माइ (paddy), जिउ (life), दाउ (bird), नाउ (boat), लाउ (gourd), जोमाउ/आमाउ (foolish), साउ (curse), खासेउ (tortoise), etc.

Rule-2: The final 'i' in the derivational suffix {-थाइ}, a form of 'फिथाइ' (result) is always written as 'इ' as in जाथाइ, मोन्थाइ, रायथाइ, मावथाइ, etc.

Rule-3: All the verb roots and stems with oi/ai and iu/ao diphthong endings end in 'य' and 'व' respectively. For examples- बाय (break), साव (roast), माव (do), राय (scold), सलाय (drive), etc.

Rule-4: The middle 'i' followed by 'a' in root words is always 'य'. For examples- आयना, गायना, आयथाल, बायथाल, हायथा, etc.

But, middle 'i' followed by 'a' in stem words may be 'इ' or 'य' on the basis of the original spelling of the roots participated in deriving the stems. For example- लाइफाँ which is derived from 'लाइ' (leaf) and 'फाँ' (plant). The middle 'i' is 'इ' in this word because it is already there in one of the deriving word 'लाइ'. Other examples- लाइगाँ (लाइ and गाँ), माइरं (माइ and रं), etc.

Rule-5: The middle 'u' sound followed by 'a' and 'e' in root words is always 'व'. For examples- दावहा, थावनि, बावखा, जावजा/जेवजा, थेवबो, खावां, मावरिया, हावरिया, सावरि, खावरि, खौवौ, etc.

Again, middle 'u' sound followed by 'a' and 'e' in stem words may be 'उ' or 'व' on the basis of the original spelling of the roots participated in deriving the stems. For example- दाउ + गाँ = दाउगाँ.

Rule-6: Frequently used words with exceptional spelling rules: नाथाय (but), थाखाय

(for), गय (betelnut), आरोबाव (moreover), गाव (self), राव (language), फाव (acting), इनाय (injustice), उराव (bug), etc.

Rule-7: Another established rule on the basis of ‘इ’ and ‘य’ is that if a nominal root word is of the structure ‘**Cai.Cai**’ (C means consonant here) then the ‘i’ in the preceding syllable will be ‘य’ and the other ‘i’ in the following syllable will be ‘इ’. But, to give an example of a nominal root of this structure is difficult.

Similarly, in the nominal root words of the structure **Cau.Cau** the preceding ‘u’ will be ‘व’ whereas the following ‘u’ will be ‘उ’. For examples- दावराउ, गावराउ, etc.

Exceptional to this rule is- if words with such structures i.e. ‘**Cai.Cai**’ and **Cau.Cau** are derived from other root words then the spelling of the root words will retain in the derived words. For examples- माइथाय, रायथाइ, etc. because माइथाय is a combination of the roots {माइ} ‘paddy’ and {थाय} ‘bear (fruit)’ and रायथाइ is a combination of {राय} ‘explain’ and {-थाइ} ‘outcome/result’. This rule is followed in case of the derived words of the structures ‘**Cau.Cai**’ and **Cai.Cau** as in दाउराइ, रायदाव, etc. because दाउराइ is derived from {दाउ} ‘bird’ and {राइ} ‘a species of birds’ and रायदाव is derived from {राय} ‘speak’ and {-दाव} ‘experience’.

‘इ’ vs ‘य’ and ‘उ’ vs ‘व’ at the suffix endings

The ‘इ’, ‘य’, ‘उ’ and ‘व’ suffix endings are not changed in the inflected word forms or derived words. The ‘इ’, ‘य’, ‘उ’ and ‘व’ suffix endings are shown below with illustration of appropriate examples-

{-आव}	→	नवाव	{-बाय}	→	फैबाय
{-नाय}	→	जानाय	{-बाव}	→	थांबाव
{-निखुइ}	→	आंनिखुइ	{-निफ्राय}	→	आंनिफ्राय
{-लाय}	→	रायलाय	{-लाय}	→	फैलाय
{-ज्लाया}	→	नांज्लाया	{-दाव}	→	थांदाव

Lesson-3: Allomorphs of {-आ} and {-आव}

Different forms of {-आ} and {-आव} suffixes

{-आ} is an inflectional suffix which has two different grammatical values, namely, *Nominative Case* and *Negative* markers whereas {-आव} is a *Locative Case* marker. Both of them are identical and share the same kind of morphophonemic changes in the Bodo orthography and hence they are taken together here.

Rule-1: {-आ} and {-आव}: After the words ending in 'ो'. For examples-

{-आ}		{-आव}			
गोसो + आ	→	गोसोआ	गोसो + आव	→	गोसोआव
गोसो + आ	→	गोसोआ	गोसो + आव	→	गोसोआव
गोर्बो + आ	→	गोर्बोआ	गोर्बो + आव	→	गोर्बोआव
लोगो + आ	→	लोगोआ	लोगो + आव	→	लोगोआव

Rule-2: {-या} and {-याव}: After the words ending in 'ा', 'ि', 'े' and 'ै' sounds. For examples-

{-या}		{-याव}			
बिमा + आ	→	बिमाया	लामा + आव	→	लामायाव
बिसि + आ	→	बिसिया	बेलासि + आव	→	बेलासियाव
बेरे + आ	→	बेरेया	थौले + आव	→	थौलेयाव
फाथै + आ	→	फाथैया	फाथै + आव	→	फाथैयाव
सै + आ	→	सैया	जाम्फै + आव	→	जाम्फैयाव

Rule-3: {-या} and {-याव}: After the word ending in 'इ'. For examples-

{-या}			{-याव}	
बिमाइ + आ	→	बिमाइया		थुनलाइ + आव → थुनलाइयाव
खावलाइ + आ	→	खावलाइया		खावलाइ + आव → खावलाइयाव
फिसाइ + आ	→	फिसाइया		मायथाइ + आव → मायथाइयाव

Rule-4: {-वा} and {-वाव}: After the words ending in 'उ', 'उ', 'ु' and 'ौ'. For examples-

{-वा}			{-वाव}	
बर' + आ	→	बर'वा		बर' + आव → बर'वाव
दाउ + आ	→	दाउवा		नाउ + आव → नाउवाव
गान्दु + आ	→	गान्दुवा		हान्थु + आव → हान्थुवाव
मोसौ + आ	→	मोसौवा		गोजौ + आव → गोजौवाव

Rule-5: {-ा} and {-ाव}: After the words ending in a consonant. For examples-

{-ा}			{-ाव}	
सम + आ	→	समा		सम + आव → समाव
दन + आ	→	दना		दन + आव → दनाव

Note: If the final consonant is 'ङ' in its secondary form as in 'गं', it will retain its primary form and the suffix {-ा}/{-ाव} will co-occur with it. For examples-

{-ा}			{-ाव}	
गं + आ	→	गडा		खान्जं + आव → खान्जडाव
खुन्दुं + आ	→	खुन्दुडा		खुन्दुं + आव → खुन्दुडाव

Lesson-4: Allomorphs of {-ओ}

Different forms of {-ओ} suffix

{-ओ} is an inflectional suffix which has two different grammatical values, namely, *Nominative Case* and *Habitual Aspect* markers. Its different allomorphic forms are {-ो}, {-यो} and {-वो}. The environments are given below-

Rule-1: {-ो}: After the words ending in consonant letters or semi vowel letters.
For examples-

बार + {-ओ}	→	बारो		खाम + {-ओ}	→	खामो
दाव + {-ओ}	→	दावो		खार + {-ओ}	→	खारो
गाय + {-ओ}	→	गायो		बिसोर + {-ओ}	→	बिसोरो
बान + {-ओ}	→	बानो		नोंसोर + {-ओ}	→	नोंसोरो

Rule-2: {-यो}: After the words ending in vowel letters or sounds other than secondary form of 'औ'. For examples-

ज + {-ओ}	→	जयो		खै + {-ओ}	→	खैयो
ला + {-ओ}	→	लायो		लाबो + {-ओ}	→	लाबोयो
बि + {-ओ}	→	बियो		हासु + {-ओ}	→	हासुयो
बे + {-ओ}	→	बेयो		मन' + {-ओ}	→	मन'यो

Rule-3: {-वो}: After the words ending in secondary form of 'औ' letters. For examples-

सौ + {-ओ}	→	सौवो		बौ + {-ओ}	→	बौवो
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Lesson-5: {-ँ} vs {-यै} and {-ि} vs {-यि}

Rule-1: {-ँ} vs {-यै}

Rule-1.1: {-ँ}: After words ending in consonant letters. For examples-

मोजां → मोजाँ	माबार → माबारै
खाम → खामै	मोन → मोनै
गोबार → गोबारै	लोबोर → लोबोरै
थाबाय → थाबायै	गाब → गाबै
गोथार → गोथारै	गोब्राब → गोब्राबै

Rule-1.2: {-यै}: After the word ending in vowel letters. For examples-

गुरै → गुरैयै	गोखे → गोखेयै
गाहाइ → गाहाइयै	गोजौ → गोजौयै
गोरा → गोरायै	गोर्ले → गोर्लेयै

Rule-2: {-ि} vs {-यि}

Rule-2.1: {-ि}: After the word ending in consonant letters. For examples-

खार → खारि	बार → बारि
सोम → सोमि	गान → गानि

Rule-2.2: {-यि}: after word ending in vowel letters. For examples-

गि → गियि	सा → सायि
फै → फैयि	ज → जयि
बौ → बौयि	मे → मेयि

Lesson-6: Use of the secondary form of अ

The punctuation mark (') known as apostrophe is used as a secondary form of अ in Bodo. अ sound occurring as the rhyme of a syllable other than the first syllable in a word is represented graphically with an apostrophe ('). For examples- ख.र' (head), गब' (submerge), सल'मा (novel), थल्थमा (Adam's apple), दाउब' (erget), मन' (swallow), खान्थखा (a thorny plant of NE India), etc.

But, in the words like साखन्द्रा, (') is not used though it appears that there is a 'अ' after the letter 'ख'. This words has three syllables- सा.खन.द्रा – here, 'ख' is not a syllable and hence does not take (').

Another type of words includes दजिद' (sixty-six), मावख' (office, workplace), फिसाख' (uterus), लाथिख' (zero), etc. where the final syllables /द'/ and /ख'/ are the lexemes for 'six' and 'chamber, container' respectively. Initially, these are spelled as द and ख i.e. without the use of (') after them as they are monosyllabic words. When they are suffixed to other bases to become second/third/fourth/fifth/... syllables they take (') due to resyllabification.

A single syllable word or the first syllable in a word, ending in अ sound is written without using this secondary form. For examples-

In the word- ब.र', the first syllable is ब (bo) ending in अ sound; but as it occurs in the first syllable position the secondary form of अ is not used. Again, in the monosyllabic words न (house), ज (sit), र (wait), etc. ending in अ sound the secondary form is not used.

Another rule associated with the use of apostrophe is that if the syllables other than the first syllable of a word are of the structures- CCV, CCCV, CCCC and so on (i.e. other than CV), then the apostrophe is not necessarily used. For examples- बमब्रमा (not बमब्र'मा), ब्रह्म (not ब्रह्म'), खिब्रमा (not खिब्र'मा), जेन्थखा (not जेन्थ'खा), etc.

Lesson-7: Deverbal adjectives

Deverbal Adjectives of the structure “gV prefix + Verb → Adjective” derived from verbs ending in ‘य’ and ‘व’ letters do not change the final letters. For examples-

{गो-} + बाव ‘become late’	→	गोबाव ‘late’
{गा-} + हाय ‘lower, become low’	→	गाहाय ‘low’
{गो-} + लाव ‘lengthen, become long’	→	गोलाव ‘long’
{गे-} + सेव ‘rot’	→	गेसेव ‘rotten’

Lesson-8: Writing system of coda 'न' (letter) followed by a suffix with onset

If the roots or stems/prefixes with 'न' letter in final position take immediate suffixes/roots or stems with onset consonants, then the 'न' letter retains its primary form. For examples-

सान + जा	→	सानजा		होन + {-जा}	→	होनजा
होन + जाब	→	होनजाब		मोन + {-दों}	→	मोनदों
{मोन-} + बा	→	मोनबा		सान + थाम	→	सानथाम
सान + जाब	→	सानजाब		मोन + सि + थां	→	मोनसिथां

But, if the words as a whole are roots where 'न' occurs in the coda position of the preceding syllable followed by another syllable with onset, then the letter 'न' makes a cluster with the onset. For examples-

गारन्दाइ, अन्थाइ, मान्जा, हान्जा, फान्जामुथि, हिन्जाउ, एन्जर, लान्जाइ, etc.

Lesson-9: Writing system of coda ‘म’ (letter) followed by a suffix with onset

If the roots or stems/prefixes with ‘म’ letter in final position take immediate suffixes/roots or stems with onset, then the ‘म’ letter retains its primary form. For examples-

सोम + {-ब्र}	→	सोमब्र		खाम + {-फा}	→	खामफा (burn together)
जाम + {-बाय}	→	जामबाय		सम + बाव	→	समबाव
खाम + थार	→	खामथार		जाम + {-ब्र}	→	जामब्र

But, if the words as a whole are roots where ‘म’ occurs in the coda position of the preceding syllable followed by another syllable with onset consonant, then the letter ‘म’ makes a cluster with the onset consonant. For examples-

खाम्फा (tomb), जाम्बा, दाम्ब्रा, etc.

Exceptionally, some words are spelled without following this rule. For example- नोम्फा. The reason behind this spelling is the assimilation during the articulation of म and फ sounds.

Lesson-10: Writing system of coda 'ब' (letter) followed by a suffix with onset

If the words with 'ब' letter in final position take immediate suffixes with onset consonants, then the 'ब' letter retains its primary form. For examples-

खब + {-फा}	→	खबफा		गाब + ख्राव	→	गाबख्राव
लोब + {-ग्रो}	→	लोबग्रो		जोब + {-बाय}	→	जोबबाय

But, if the words as a whole are roots where 'ब' occurs in the coda position of the preceding syllable followed by another syllable with onset consonant, then the letter 'ब' makes a cluster with the onset consonant. For examples-

सिब्बा, गोब्बा, आब्रा, जाब्रां, हाब्रां, etc.

Lesson-11: Writing system of coda 'र' (letter) followed by a suffix with onset

If the words with 'र' letter in final position take immediate suffixes with onset consonants, then the 'र' letter retains its primary form. For examples-

खार + लां	→	खारलां		फुर + गेव	→	फुरगेव
नेर + खां	→	नेरखां		हर + {-बाय}	→	हरबाय
अर + दाब	→	अरदाब		लिर + {-दों}	→	लिरदों

But, if the words as a whole are roots where 'र' occurs in the coda position of the preceding syllable followed by another syllable with onset consonant, then the letter 'र' makes a cluster with the onset consonant. For examples-

गार्लार, गोर्लै, बोर्लार, जार्लार, फोर्लार, गोर्लो, etc.

Lesson-12: Co-occurrences of postpositions with head words

The postpositons गौनां, गौरा, बादि, गौसा, गौजौं, गौजा, खौमा, मानि, थौलो, etc. while co-occurring with their respective head words follow certain rules.

The postpositions गौनां, गौरा and बादि occur as free words or suffixes to their head words following two different rules whereas गौसा, गौजौं, गौजा, खौमा, मानि and थौलो always co-occur with their head words as free words only. For examples-

(a) मान + गौनां → मानगौनां

(c) गौहौ + गौरा → गौहौगौरा

(e) हर + बादि → हरबादि

(g) मेगन + गौसा → मेगन गौसा

(i) औंखाम + गौजा → औंखाम गौजा

(k) सानसे + मानि → सानसे मानि

(b) नायनौ + गौनां → नायनौ गौनां

(d) गौहौनि + गौरा → गौहौनि गौरा

(f) हरनि + बादि → हरनि बादि

(h) साबा + गौजौं → साबा गौजौं

(j) आदा + खौमा → आदा खौमा

(l) हरफा + थौलो → हरफा थौलो

In the examples (a), (c) and (e) above the postpositions गौनां, गौरा and बादि respectively are co-occurring with the head words. The head words मान, गौहौ and हर are roots without any affix. Therefore, the postpositions co-occur with them as suffixes. But, in (b), (d) and (f) they are not co-occurring with the head words. Because, the head words have suffixes co-occurring with them.

Lesson-13: Complex verbs

Complex verbs are always written as single units like individual words. For examples-

मिथिहो (not मिथि हो); e.g.- बे बिलाइजों मिथिहोनाय जायोदि देग्लाइनि बैसागोखौ लाइमोन
आफादनि मावखुलियाव खुंनाय जागोन।

सोर्जिलां (not सोर्जि लां); e.g.- बिथाडा सोर्जिलांनाय थुनलाइया रुजुजाथावि।

रुजुजा (not रुजु जा); e.g.- बिथाडा सोर्जिलांनाय थुनलाइया रुजुजाथावि।

खावलायहर (not खावलाय हर); e.g.- गाबोननि हाबाफारियाव नुजाथिफैनो थाखाय
नोंथांमोनखौ खावलायहरनाय जाबाय।

नुजाथिफै (not नुजाथि फै); e.g.- मैयानि मेलायाव गोबां रायजोफोरा नुजाथिफैदोंमोन।

फोरमायलाय (not फोरमाय लाय); e.g.- बिसोरो गोसोनि सान्नायखौ फोरमायलायदोंमोन।

Lesson-14: Writing system of numerals

All the numerals upto 100 are written as single words in Bodo. For examples-

दाइन (8), जिस्नि (17), नैजिथाम (23), थामजिनै (32), ब्रैजिद' (46),
बाजिसे (51), दजिबा (65), स्निजिगु (79), दाइनजिब्रै (84), गुजिदाइन (98),
जौसे/सेजौ (100)

If a numeral is in between 101 and 1000, then it is written as a phrase containing a couple words. For examples-

सेजौ से (101), नैजौ द (206), थामजौ नैजिब्रै (324),
ब्रैजौ बाजि (450), बाजौ दाइन (508), दजौ दाइनजिदाइन (688),
स्निजौ गुजिगु (799), दाइनजौ जिथाम (813), गुजौ दाइनजिथाम (983)
से रोजा (1000)

Note: 1000 is also written and read as a single word as रोजासे.

The numerals beyond 1000 upto 9099 with the second digit '0' are written and read as a phrase of three words. For examples-

से रोजा से (1001), से रोजा गुजिगु (1099), नै रोजा बाजिनै (2052)

But, the numerals beyond 1101 upto 9999 with the second digit other than '0' are written and read as a phrase of four words. For examples-

से रोजा सेजौ से (1101), थाम रोजा सेजौ बाजिबा (3155), ब्रै रोजा दजौ गु (4609)

Multiple numerals of 1000 upto 100000 are written and read as a phrase containing a couple words. For examples-

1000	→	से रोजा		79000	→	स्निजिगु रोजा
6000	→	द रोजा		99000	→	गुजिगु रोजा
65000	→	दजिबा रोजा		100000	→	से लाख

Again, multiple numerals of 100000 upto 10000000 are written and read as a phrase containing a couple words. For examples-

200000	→	नै लाख		5900000	→	बाजिगु लाख
6600000	→	दजिद' लाख		9300000	→	गुजिथाम लाख
65000	→	दजिबा रोजा		10000000	→	से खौटि

Lesson-15: Spelling system of loanwords and proper nouns

Based on the sounds in the loanwords and proper nouns the corresponding letters with be used in spelling. It also follows the sets of rules already mentioned above in the preceding lessons of the same chapter. The corresponding letters with the sounds they carry are given below-

k, q – क	gh – घ	ch – च	chh – छ
jh – झ	t – ट	d – ड	dh – ध, ढ
n – न	ṅ – ण	rh – ढ	ṛh – ङ
p – प	bh – भ	sh – श, ष	ri – ऋ ‘ृ’
i – इ ‘ि’	i: – ई ‘ी’	u – उ ‘ु’	u: – ऊ, ‘ू’

Some examples of loanwords and proper names are given below-

गलाघाट, घड़ी, कृष्ण, चबिन, चन्दना, ऊट गाध’, आपेल, चीन, etc.

N.B.: This is a preliminary version. For any query, suggestion and addition, please write to us at bodojournal@gmail.com. We are bringing out a simplified and much more detailed Bodo spelling rules as a Bodo-English bilingual volume, shortly.