Dear Md Siddique,

Thank you very much for your kind gift of Rohingyalish readers and dictionary, which we received at the hands of your friend Jamil R. He visited our home on Sunday 9th September.

They said that you invited our comments on your design for Rohingyalish. We are very impressed by your work, but can suggest improvements in certain areas:

Your system seems to have been restricted only to the characters/letters which were available in the Basic Latin (Western) character set, before the introduction of Unicode. But the available character set has now been widely extended under Unicode. See for example the various Latin Extended character sets by navigating

www.unicode.org "where is my character?" code chart

You can now consider a wider range of characters than was available in Basic Latin.

For example, instead of the c-cedilla you are using for retroflex-R, you may prefer one of the various accented or dotted r's that are available in Latin Extended. Likewise, instead of dh and th for the retroflex t's and d's, you could choose from the available accented or dotted t's and d's.

Also, you talk about there being two different h's in the Rohingya sound system but this is not shown in spelling. You would easily be able to choose a different accented h to mark this in your writing system.

A little work on your part (with the help of MS Keyboard Layout Creator) will enable users to type these extra characters easily, much as you already did for the c-cedilla.

Your system of marking stress or tone with an acute accent is very clear and simple. But some Rohingya linguists suggest that there may be the need for additional tone marks. We don't know have an opinion on this ourselves, but we would suggest there be some discussion on this area between the various key people concerned with Rohingya language so that everyone is happy with your system and it will become more widely used.

Your readers and dictionary need to be edited by a native English speaker, as some of the explanations are not in clear or idiomatically correct English.

The dictionary should be supplemented by basic verb tables. For example, instead of having multiple entries for some of the various parts of the verb dek- 'to see', where you have put deikkye', deikkyi', deke'r, deki'ba as separate entries, these could be displayed in a much more complete and useful form as a table in an appendix.

Not everyone we have spoken with is happy with the name 'Rohingyalish'. We suggest some community consensus could be achieved by inviting suggestions for alternative names. Maybe at the end no better name will be found, but wider agreement should result merely by being open to suggestions.

Any changes to your character set (alphabet) would not mean that your work has to be redone. Upgrade can be achieved by a simple 'find and replace' in a very short time.

We believe your Rohingyalish system deserves wide acceptance and should be developed. However, this should not in our view prevent an Arabic-based writing system from being used alongside Rohingyalish, as the two systems will serve different sections of Rohingya society.

We are very happy to help you in any way we can be of service.

Regards,

UK Linguists

London

Dear UK Linguists,

Thanks a lot for your comments on Rohingyalish. I am very sorry that I missed your email in reading in due time because of Ramadan fasting month and so delayed to response.

It is my great pleasure to receive your hearty thanks for my small gifts to you and I am very grateful for your valuable time that you have spent to read the materials to find very valuable comments for us.

1. Indeed your suggestion to use Extended Latin characters from Unicode Table is very valuable and to solve the keyboard problem by using "MS Keyboard Layout Creator" is very beautiful idea.

As suggested, I have explored through Latin Extended-A and 7 pairs of characters are of my interest to write the variants of (D,d), (H,h) and (T,t). The corresponding hex-codes for capital and small letter forms are (10E/**110**,10F/**111**), (110/**124**,111/**125**), and (164/166/**162**,165/167/**163**) where my preference is those shown in bold (for various reasons). Similarly for retroflex-R, my choice is the bold in this hex codes (158/156/**154**,159/157/**155**).

Even, before your valuable suggestion, I have spent countless hours in exploring almost all European countries' Latin character sets as well as some Asian and African Latin character sets in search of suitable characters for the variants of D,H,T and R. But I was in extreme cautious and have always second thought to pick any new characters as they are not only foreign and alien to Rohingyas but also may bring a great burden or complexities for the Rohingya readers as well as configurations and settings for the machines. I always think to make our Language as simple as possible in all respect yet not to compromise any degree in maintaining my goal "What you speak is what you write or vice versa". So I choose only two characters which are used by many European countries so that I may not face much problem to use for all computers, Internet and small devices like mobile phones and also I stick to International US keyboard to further streamline our language. You can say it is designed with the idea in mind for simple, rugged, unbreakable and hassle free for any environment.

However, I always think of improving the language where adding those new characters are one of the options I have in mind, but waiting for the appropriate time.

2. Regarding stress mark, as you suggest, many people do like it very much. But again adding many others that are available is reserved to use only with great caution. My idea is not to introduce any complexities unless it is worth the burden that may introduce. The only one that I thought may be useful is backward accent (à è ì ò ù) but to be used only for the vowel at the end of a word.

Best Regards
Eng. Mohammed Siddique
Jeddah, Saudi Arabia