Introducing Shavian 2.0 (Shavian Namian)

Introduction

This announcement is in Roman, because Shavian 1.0 is now defunct and you don't know Shavian 2.0 yet. Please take a few minutes to familiarise yourself with the information in these pages so that you don't fall out of touch. Stay tuned and you will be communicating exclusively in Shavian 2.0 very soon!

When Mr. Ronald Kingsley Read submitted his prize-winning entry to George Bernard Shaw's new English phonemic alphabet competition, he was labouring under a requirement to comply with several conditions imposed by Shaw in his will. Consequently, he felt compelled to specify in his description of the alphabet several factors with with which he did not personally agree. He really believed:

1. He was creating a whole new language, not just a phonemic alphabet for spelling the English language.

Also, he was high on laudanum when he submitted the final proposal. Consequently:

2. He accidentally switched the ha-ha and hung symbols in his confused state. Ha-ha is voiceless, so naturally it should be tall, along with the rest of the tall letters; hung is voiced, so it should be deep. Shavian 2.0 is high-ha-ha-ian, as Mr Kingsley Read intended in his sober state.

You will all be familiar with the Shavian letter names (peep, tot, etc.) given to each of the Shavian letters. Read intended that these should actually be the sole 48 words of the new Shavian language, not just some fun set of descriptors for his curvy new glyphs. These words were chosen very carefully by Kingsley Read, so as to encompass all semantic possibilities required by the man on the Clapham omnibus.

In Shavian 2.0 (Shavian Namian) we restore Kingsley Read's intentions and fix all of the problems with the previous iteration of the alphabet.
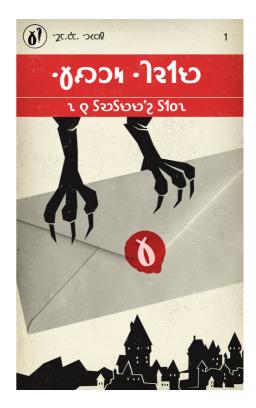
What was wrong with Shavian 1.0

I probably don't need to explain this to you, but just so that we're all on the same page, here you go:

ENGLISH SPEAKERS DON'T ALL USE THE SAME PHONOLOGY. We're not even talking about differences between countries here: even in England, a speaker from London has a phonological distinction between the vowels in the words "put" and "putt", but his cousin 100 miles away in Birmingham has no such distinction. The differences only get worse when we contrast the phonologies of British English accents with those of the Empire's North American colonies, for example. Shavian 1.0, as a simple alternative alphabet for English spelling, was never going to be a unifier when faced with this first stumbling block.

As an example of this, here is the cover of one of the few books ever published in the Shavian 1.0 alphabet.

This, I am sure, is a perfectly good representation of the children's book title in the transliterator's own accent, but as a British English speaker I am left wondering, before even opening the book: "Who is this hairy porter? Is he one of the ancillary staff at Hogwart's?" Shavian 1.0 wasn't bringing us together, it was driving us apart. For all of the problems of the traditional Roman-alphabet English spelling system, it never laboured under the misapprehension that it was phonemic: it was just some once-phonemic, now arbitrary graphical system for conveying meaning, divorced largely from the sounds of one's own accent. Writing in Roman did not (for those who had already learned how to spell in English) involve the thought-process of encoding the sounds of one's speech as letters, because the *symbols* of one's thoughts, divorced from the sound of one's voice, had already been learned in childhood. The lack of relationship between the spelling of a word and its pronunciation in the traditional orthography was in fact a strength of written English as a global lingua franca, at the same time as presenting a barrier to entry for new speakers.

What is right about Shavian 2.0 (Shavian Namian)

In Shavian 2.0, you don't have to worry about re-encoding the sounds of your own English accent variant according to some long-dead phonology of 1960s England, because in Shavian 2.0 you are no longer speaking English: you are speaking the Shavian language! There are only 48 words in the language, and you can pronounce them however the hell you want.

The singular pronouns

There are only three pronouns to learn in Shavian 2.0. You're welcome! Their singular forms are as follows:

Shavian 2.0	Shavian 2.0 Romanised	English
𐑉	**Ian**	*I, me*
𐑢	**yew**	*you* (singular)
𐑖	**they**	*he, him, she, her, they* (singular), *them* (singular), *it*

Ian is the only Shavian word-glyph whose Romanised form begins with a capital letter, for a reason: it is the "I un", the most important word. It's you!

Note that all singular third-person pronouns are now represented by a single word, 𐑖 (**they).** Gender-specific third-person pronouns were on their way out anyway.

All of the other words

All of the other 45 words shall be used as common sense dictates, according to their current meaning in English. Agglutinate as appropriate, building larger words from the basic set, to construct the meanings that you require. In addition, there are some further innovations in Shavian Namian, as noted below.

In the paragraphs that follow, examples are given in Shavian 2.0 word-glyphs (𐑒𐑦𐑯), the Romanised form of those word-glyphs (**bold**), and the translation of those word-glyphs into English (*italics*).

Plurals

All plurals, including plural pronouns, are formed simply by adding the suffix 𐑪 (**-array***)* after the singular form. E.g.

Shavian 2.0	Shavian 2.0 Romanised	English
𐑤	**egg**	*egg*
𐑤𐑪	**egg-array**	*eggs*
𐑮	**Ian**	*I/me*
𐑮𐑪	**Ian-array**	*we/us*

I am sure that by now you are marvelling at how wonderfully concise a language Shavian 2.0 is!

Some additional verb innovations

Use 𐑪 (**are**) for all forms of the verb *to be* in the present tense. For tense modifiers, see the separate section below.

In addition to its traditional use as a preposition, use 𐑬 (**out)** for the verb *to go*.

To indicate coming as opposed to going, precede 𐑬 (**-out)** with the noun/pronoun to which the subject is coming.

Shavian 2.0	Shavian 2.0 Romanised	English
𐑪	**are**	*am/are/is*
𐑬	**out**	*go*
[noun/pronoun]𐑬	**[noun/pronoun]-out**	*come**
𐑛	**ado**	*do*

* See The Lord's Prayer for examples.

Tenses

To indicate anything in the past, add 𐑦 (**dead)** before the present-tense form of the verb. To indicate anything in the future, add 𐑓 (**vow)** before the present-tense form of the verb.

Shavian 2.0	Shavian 2.0 Romanised	English
𐑮 𐑒 𐑑	**Ian kick tot**	*I kick the baby*
𐑮 𐑓 𐑒 𐑑	**Ian vow kick tot**	*I will kick the baby*
𐑮 𐑦 𐑒 𐑑	**Ian dead kick tot**	*I kicked the baby*
𐑮𐑪 𐑓 𐑒 𐑑𐑪	**Ian-array vow kick tot-array**	*We will kick the babies*

Past participles

To produce the past participle of a verb, add 𐑊 (-dead) after the verb.

Shavian 2.0	Shavian 2.0 Romanised	English
𐑮𐑊	**ado-dead**	*done*
𐑒𐑊	**out-dead**	*gone*

Possession

To indicate possession, add the suffix 𐑘 (-**hung)** after the pronoun or noun. Some examples:

Shavian 2.0	Shavian 2.0 Romanised	English
𐑮𐑘 𐑝	**Ian-hung wool**	*my wool*
𐑮𐑯𐑘 𐑛	**Ian-array-hung church**	*our church*

Prepositions

Use 𐑦 (**on)** for all prepositions except for �7 (**up)**.

The Lord's Prayer

It is traditional, when describing an unfamiliar language or a neolang to others, to give a translation of the Lord's Prayer in that language. No problem!

Shavian 2.0	Shavian 2.0 Romanised	English
𐑮𐑯𐑘 ·𐑒𐑛 𐑦 𐑪,	Ian-array-hung Age-judge on air,	Our Father, who art in heaven,
𐑛 𐑩 𐑢𐑘 𐑩𐑤;	church roar are yew-hung roar-peep;	hallowed be thy name;
𐑢𐑘 𐑛 𐑮 𐑢𐑒;	yew-hung church vow yew-out;	thy kingdom come;
𐑢𐑘 𐑮 𐑩 𐑮𐑊;	yew-hung vow roar vow ado-dead;	thy will be done;
𐑦 𐑯 𐑕 𐑩 𐑪 𐑪.	on ash so they are on air.	on earth as it is in heaven.
𐑜 𐑮𐑯 𐑩𐑦 𐑮𐑯𐑘 𐑪𐑚.	measure Ian-array on air-egg Ian-array-hung ooze-ash.	Give us this day our daily bread.
𐑜 𐑮𐑯 𐑮𐑯𐑘 𐑕𐑒,	measure Ian-array Ian-array-hung err-out,	And forgive us our trespasses,
𐑕 𐑮𐑯 𐑜 𐑩 𐑩 𐑒𐑦 𐑮𐑯.	so Ian-array measure they they err-out on Ian-array.	as we forgive those who trespass against us.
𐑯 𐑒 𐑮𐑯 𐑦 𐑩/;	nun out-mime Ian-array on ah-woe;	And lead us not into temptation;
𐑒 𐑮𐑯 𐑒 𐑩𐑛.	out-mime Ian-array on-out woe-church.	but deliver us from evil.
𐑛 𐑩 𐑢𐑘,	church are yew-hung,	For thine is the kingdom,
𐑦 𐑦 𐑩,	oil on awe,	the power and the glory,
𐑪𐑦 𐑦 𐑪.	air-egg on air-egg.	for ever and ever.
𐑤.	yea.	Amen.

Conclusion

That's all there is to it! I am sure you will agree, Shavian 2.0 is a vast improvement over its predecessor and will allow us to bond more closely as a language-reform community.

<div align="right">

Lionel Ghoti
Shavian 2.0 Progenitor and Overlord
shavian.saytheword.org

</div>

Mickle Muxloe
England
1 April 2025   𐑥