

To: Unicode Technical Committee
From: Deborah Anderson, SEI, UC Berkeley
Date: 27 February 2018
Subject: Feedback on name for U+16F4F MIAO SIGN CONSONANT MODIFIER BAR

The following feedback was received as part of the “Feedback to UTC / Encoding Proposals” section of [L2/18-009](#) Comments on Public Review Issues (October 13, 2017 - January 20, 2018), specifically on the name of a Miao character. Note the name was changed at the UTC #153 in October 2017 from MIAO SIGN NUKTA to MIAO SIGN CONSONANT MODIFIER BAR, after discussion.

Date/Time: Sat Nov 11 19:06:19 CST 2017
Name: Eduardo Marín Silva
Report Type: Feedback on an Encoding Proposal ([L2/17-345](#))
Opt Subject: MIAO SIGN CONSONANT MODIFIER BAR name

The name of this sign does not indicate its function clearly and the fact that this sign is a combining character is not expressed. A better name would be MIAO SIGN COMBINING CONTRAST OF ARTICULATION. If the comitee does not believe that a spacing version of this character will be proposed, then one could drop the term "combining" to get MIAO SIGN CONTRAST OF ARTICULATION.

The following is the response from Adrian Cheuk (author of Miao additions proposal [L2/17-345](#)):

AFAIK, the word "combining" is used mainly in the block "Combing Diacritical Marks" to contrast the marks with their spacing counterparts in another block "Spacing Modifier Letters". For marks in a particular script, the common practice has instead been to simply name them "<X> SIGN/MARK <Y>", where <X>=script name & <Y>=mark name, e.g. U+1A7B TAI THAM SIGN MAI SAM and U+05C4 HEBREW MARK UPPER DOT.

The assumption is that only one encoding model can be accepted for any single mark in that script, which is also true in our case here where the mark in concern can be encoded as either combining or spacing but not both. Furthermore, naming the mark functionally is not ideal since one mark can be used in multiple ways even across language groups that share the same script. E.g., U+0304 COMBINING MACRON often marks vowel length in various systems of transliterations and transcriptions but is used for high tone in Mandarin Chinese; U+0308 COMBINING DIAERESIS is used in German to mark contrast in the place of articulation, but in Greek & French it indicates isolated reading, i.e., the vowel is to be pronounced separately & not grouped with the preceding vowel to form a diphthong. In fact, these examples (& many others) clearly show that marks are not named by function but often by appearance or by their indigenous name if any. In light of these, we do not think there is a need to revise the name of the current character in concern.