L2/20-XXXX

Re: ESC comments on 2020 Q3 feedback
From: Unicode Emoji Subcommittee (ESC)
To: Unicode Technical Committee (UTC)
Date: 2020-09-11

This document provides ESC comments (in *italics*) with regard to feedback on Emoji 13.1 and 14.0 posted in document L2/20-200.

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1. WHITE RIGHTWARDS BACKHAND and WHITE LEFTWARDS HAND

No new hand‑shape characters have included the qualifier "white" in their name since Unicode 7.0 in 2014. These characters should simply be called RIGHTWARDS BACKHAND and LEFTWARDS HAND respectively. They do not derive from a dingbat font, but were invented from whole cloth for emoji use, so the chances of ever needing black versions are pretty slim. The word "white" in emoji names where the actual colour white is not meant always leads to slight confusion among users.

Response: The current CLDR names do not include white. Character names have inherited the legacy naming structure denoting "filled" or "hollow". Nonetheless, the ESC recommends the UTC drop "white" from the names in the provisional list for WHITE RIGHTWARDS BACKHAND *and* WHITE LEFTWARDS HAND.

2. FACE WITH HAND OVER MOUTH

To make the intended contrast with U+1F92D SMILING FACE WITH SMILING EYES AND HAND COVERING MOUTH more explicit, a qualifier like "with open eyes" could be added to the character name, as confusion over the shape of the eyes was the main reason this new character was proposed.

Response: Using names to be explicit about the emoji design is one way to mitigate fragmentation. With regard to this particular emoji vendors are aware of the intent to disambiguate with the existing FACE WITH HAND OVER MOUTH.

3. THUMB AND INDEX FINGER CROSSED

For consistency with U+1F91E HAND WITH INDEX AND MIDDLE FINGERS CROSSED, this character should be given the formal name HAND WITH THUMB AND INDEX FINGER CROSSED.

Response: While inconsistent with previous character names, moving forward, the ESC is intentionally moving forward with an abbreviated naming structure.

4. *Face in Clouds*

The choice of U+1F636 FACE WITHOUT MOUTH as base character for this ZWJ sequence is odd and seems to be largely motivated by the fact that the mouth happens to be obscured in the sample art provided by the original proposal document. There is however no requirement that the mouth of this emoji not be visible and using U+1F636 could needlessly restrict vendors when crafting their own interpretations of the design.

The proposed keywords for *Face in Clouds* are "confused", "delirious", and "forgetful", while FACE WITHOUT MOUTH is annotated with "quiet" and "silent". Emojipedia further cites "humility", "disappointment", "frustration", and "sadness" as possible interpretations of the latter. These two sets of emotions are clearly not compatible; the currently proposed ZWJ sequence could therefore lead to confusion and miscommunication when the receiving end does not have support for the sequence and only sees or hears its individual components in unligated form. ZWJ sequences should always be defined with scenarios like this in mind.

In my opinion, U+1F615 CONFUSED FACE is much better suited for the range of emotions this sequence is trying to represent. Alternatives like U+1F610 NEUTRAL FACE, U+1F641 SLIGHTLY FROWNING FACE or U+1F626 FROWNING FACE WITH OPEN MOUTH, which are commonly shown with similar expressions, would also be possible.

Response: Facial expressions of the smiley emoji drive how they are used more than the CLDR names. In light of this, we chose an emoji to ZWJ that most closely visually and conceptually reflects the intended range of expression.

5. *Face Exhaling*

U+1F4A8 DASH SYMBOL is not a puff of breath, but a cloud of dust produced by a cartoon character running away really fast. It is annotated as such in the emoji data and its CLDR short name fittingly is *Dashing Away*. The combination of U+1F62E FACE WITH OPEN MOUTH and U+1F4A8 DASH SYMBOL does therefore not represent a face calmly exhaling, but a face escaping from the scene at high speed. Coupled with the fact that U+1F62E can also be used to indicate sudden shock or surprise, this ZWJ sequence is just begging to be wildly misinterpreted.
As there is no emoji in Unicode that represents breath (with the exception of U+1F32C WIND BLOWING FACE, which is unsuitable), there is no sensible way to encode this emoji as a ZWJ sequence. It should be postponed until Unicode 14.0 and added as an atomic character instead.

Response: The Dashing Away symbol has come to have much more broad use including the expulsion of air from the human body. Observing and adopting how people use emoji, and be limited by what they are named in CLDR is in the best interest of the general public and this

committee.

6. *Face with Spiral Eyes*

I believe the UTC is making a mistake redefining U+1F635 Dɪᴢᴢʏ Fᴀᴄᴇ to be a face with X-shaped eyes to accommodate this new ZWJ sequence.

There is nothing spiral‑like about U+1F4AB Dɪᴢᴢʏ Sʏᴍʙᴏʟ, neither in terms of its semantics, nor in any of the vendor illustrations that have been created so far. There is no reason why this character should be a modifier to make a face's eyes spiral‑shaped. In fact, this raises an interesting point: If the combination of two "dizzy" emoji – Dɪᴢᴢʏ Fᴀᴄᴇ and Dɪᴢᴢʏ Sʏᴍʙᴏʟ – is meant to be displayed as a face with spiral eyes, does that not imply that spiral eyes are the best possible representation of dizziness and that therefore Dɪᴢᴢʏ Fᴀᴄᴇ – unambiguously the semantically correct emoji for dizziness – should be shown with spiral eyes by default?

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Regardless of which of these solutions is chosen, I also firmly believe that U+1F635 should retain its CLDR short name of *Dizzy Face* and not be renamed to *Face with Spiral Eyes*, even if no separate spiral eyes emoji is ultimately encoded. Changing this character from representing a certain emotion (which could have any number of glyphs associated with it) to representing only a very specific glyph is a bad idea in any case, even if said glyph happens to be an accurate visualisation of that emotion.

Response: This feedback primarily relates to whether Xs represent 'Dizziness', which is reasonable feedback though not the primary purpose of this new sequence.

The disambiguation chosen allows the existing emoji to keep the most backward-compatible uses, especially as this relates to an original Japanese entry approved for compatibility with Japanese carriers. The name is unfortunate, but cannot be changed, and joins a legacy of other difficult Unicode Character names that have gone on to commonly show something else (Billiards, "Look of Triumph", Pistol) where often the CLDR name comes to the rescue.

It is worth noting that Xs have been used for eyes in Japanese carrier sets where U+1F635 originated, and on nearly all major vendors over the past decade. The exception has been a few vendors representing the same emoji with spiral eyes. DIZZY FACE could be renamed "Face With X Eyes" in CLDR post 14.0, so the UCD name becomes less relevant moving ahead. We agree if starting fresh with a 'dizzy face' emoji that Xs wouldn't have been chosen to represent dizziness, but that's not the place we're in now.