Proposal to Add Four SENĆOŦEN Latin Charaters

by: John Elliot, Peter Brand, and Chris Harvey
of: Saanich Native Heritage Society and First Peoples' Cultural Foundation
Date: May 5, 2004

The SENĆOŦEN language is spoken on the southern tip of Vancouver Island. It's orthography was created by the the late Dave Elliott, a respected member of the Saanich First Nation. The script is at once identifiable by the fact that it employs only majuscules (except for "s"). The community is actively using this writing system, especially in the field of language education.

The majority of the letters in the orthography are already either: encoded by Unicode; or accessible by character + combining diacritic. The four proposed additions here are not present in the current Unicode standard, nor can they be created with floating diacritics. Although they could be made up of Letter + overlay diacritic, it is my understanding that the Unicode Consortium would prefer to create unique code points for these types of letters (e.g. recent acceptance of LATIN LETTER SMALL C WITH STROKE).

The four letters are:

Ⱥ   LATIN CAPITAL LETTER A WITH STROKE

Ȼ   LATIN CAPITAL LETTER C WITH STROKE

Ł   LATIN CAPITAL LETTER L WITH BAR

Ⱦ   LATIN CAPITAL LETTER T WITH SLASH

Figures 1 and 2 show excerpts from a SENĆOŦEN language text book and dictionary. The Saanich Tribal School SENCOTEN language education materials were prepared by Lindy Elliott, SENCOTEN language teacher, Saanich Indian School Board, 1998. Arrows point to the characters in this proposal.
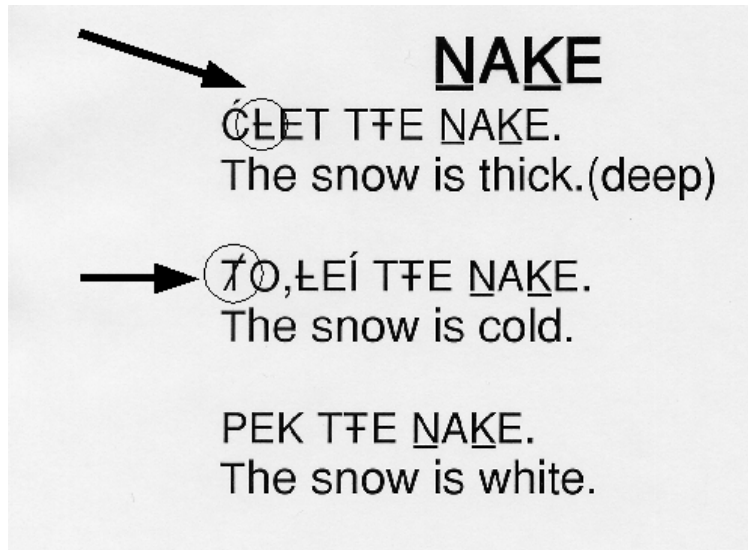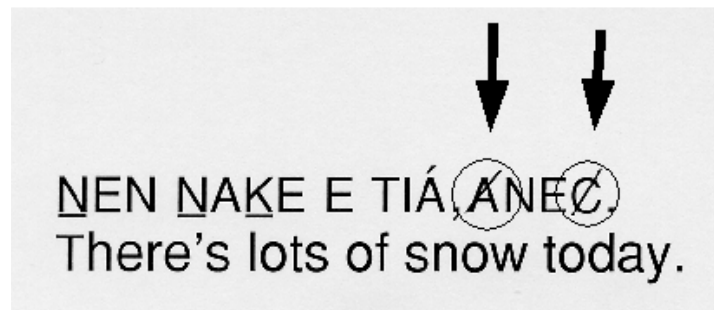
Figure 1: showing Ł and Ⱦ

Figure 2: showing Ⱥ and Ȼ

A. Administrative

1. Title: Proposal to Add Four SENĆOŦEN Latin Charaters
2. Requester's name: John Elliot, Peter Brand, and Chris Harvey
3. Requester type (Member body/Liaison/Individual contribution): Saanich Native Heritage Society and First Peoples' Cultural Foundation
4. Submission date: May 5, 2004
5. Requester's reference (if applicable):
6. Choose one of the following:
      a. This is a complete proposal: Yes
      b. More information will be provided later: No

B. Technical - General

1. Choose one of the following:
      a. This proposal is for a new script (set of characters): No
            Proposed name of script:
      b. The proposal is for addition of character(s) to an existing block: Yes
            Name of the existing block: a Latin Block

2. Number of characters in proposal: 4

3. Proposed category: A-Contemporary

4. Proposed Level of Implementation (1, 2 or 3): 1

       Is a rationale provided for the choice? No

       If Yes, reference:

5. Is a repertoire including character names provided? Yes

       a. If YES, are the names in accordance with the "character naming guidelines" in Annex L of P&P document? Yes

       b. Are the character shapes attached in a legible form suitable for review? Yes

6a. Who will provide the appropriate computerized font (ordered preference: True Type, or PostScript format) for publishing the standard? Chris Harvey

6b. If available now, identify source(s) for the font (include address, e-mail, ftp-site, etc.) and indicate the tools used: Chris Harvey, www.languagegeek.com chris@languagegeek.com

7. References:

       a. Are references (to other character sets, dictionaries, descriptive texts etc.) provided? Yes

       b. Are published examples of use (such as samples from newspapers, magazines, or other sources) of proposed characters attached? Yes

8. Special encoding issues: Does the proposal address other aspects of character data processing (if applicable) such as input, presentation, sorting, searching, indexing, transliteration etc. (if yes please enclose information)? No

9. Additional Information:

Submitters are invited to provide any additional information about Properties of the proposed Character(s) or Script that will assist in correct understanding of and correct linguistic processing of the proposed character(s) or script. Examples of such properties are: Casing information, Numeric information, Currency information, Display behaviour information such as line breaks, widths etc., Combining behaviour, Spacing behaviour, Directional behaviour, Default Collation behaviour, relevance in Mark Up contexts, Compatibility equivalence and other Unicode normalization related information. See the Unicode standard at http://www.unicode.org for such information on other scripts. Also see http://www.unicode.org/Public/UNIDATA/UCD.html and associated Unicode Technical Reports for information needed for consideration by the Unicode Technical Committee for inclusion in the Unicode Standard.

Lu=Upper Case, 0=Spacing Letter, L=Left to right

LATIN CAPITAL LETTER A WITH STROKE;Lu;0;L

LATIN CAPITAL LETTER C WITH STROKE;Lu;0;L

LATIN CAPITAL LETTER L WITH BAR;Lu;0;L

LATIN CAPITAL LETTER T WITH SLASH;Lu;0;L

C. Technical - Justification

1. Has this proposal for addition of character(s) been submitted before? No
2. Has contact been made to members of the user community (for example: National Body, user groups of the script or characters, other experts, etc.)? Yes

      If YES, with whom? John Elliot, Saanich Native Heritage Society (SNHS)
      If YES, available relevant documents: Attached letter from SNHS

3. Information on the user community for the proposed characters (for example: size, demographics, information technology use, or publishing use) is included? Used in educational materials, government documents, on internet, linguists.
4. The context of use for the proposed characters (type of use; common or rare): Common within the communities.
5. Are the proposed characters in current use by the user community? Yes   **If YES, where?** The Saanich (Straits Salish) First Nations of Vancouver Island
6. After giving due considerations to the principles in the P&P document must the proposed characters be entirely in the BMP? Yes
If YES, is a rationale provided? Basic orthographical symbols of the language.
7. Should the proposed characters be kept together in a contiguous range (rather than being scattered)? No
8. Can any of the proposed characters be considered a presentation form of an existing character or character sequence? No

      If YES, is a rationale for its inclusion provided?

9. Can any of the proposed characters be encoded using a composed character sequence of either existing characters or other proposed characters? Yes, using overlay combining diacritics.

      If YES, is a rationale for its inclusion provided? To my knowledge, Unicode supports unique characters for Letter + Overlay

10. Can any of the proposed character(s) be considered to be similar (in appearance or function) to an existing character? No

      If YES, is a rationale for its inclusion provided?

11. Does the proposal include use of combining characters and/or use of composite sequences? No.

      If YES, is a rationale for such use provided?

12. Is a list of composite sequences and their corresponding glyph images (graphic symbols) provided? No.
13. Does the proposal contain characters with any special properties such as control function or similar semantics? No
If YES, describe in detail (include attachment if necessary)
14. Does the proposal contain any Ideographic compatibility character(s)? No

      If YES, is the equivalent corresponding unified ideographic character(s) identified?

Saanich Native Heritage Society
7449 West Saanich Road
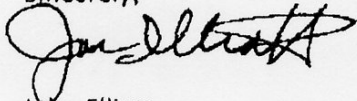Brentwood Bay
B.C., Canada
May 5, 2004

Chairperson
Unicode Consortium

Dear Sir/Ms.

On behalf of the Saanich People of Vancouver Island, British Columbia, Canada, I respectfully request the addition of the four special characters of the SENĆOŦEN orthography (Á, Ȼ, Ⱦ, and Ⱦ · as per attached documentation) into the Unicode Standard, to better enable the Saanich People full and proper access to the use of their language in computing, publishing and the Internet.

My father, the late Dave Elliott, created the SENĆOŦEN orthography in 1977 in order to save the Saanich language from extinction. This orthography is now widely used by students of the Saanich Tribal School and local area public schools. In excess of 3000 students are now exposed to the SENĆOŦEN language and orthography. The adoption of Unicode technology by the Saanich Nation has triggered widespread use of the Saanich language in the education system and increasingly in mainstream communications and publishing.

Sincerely,

John Elliott
Chairman, SNHS
Head SENĆOŦEN Language Teacher,
Saanich Indian School Board