

Approval of new IPA sound: the labiodental flap

In April 2005, the IPA Council received a formal request to vote on the adoption a standard IPA symbol for the labiodental flap. The request was made by Dr. Kenneth S. Olson, Associate International Linguistics Coordinator, SIL International, and was supported by Prof. Peter Ladefoged, a member of the IPA Council.

In his letter of request, Dr. Olson provided justification for the need for a standard IPA symbol for the labiodental flap. He stated that, "Research has shown that the labiodental flap is quite widespread in Africa. It is attested in at least seventy languages and is fully incorporated into the phonological system of at least twenty languages. A standard IPA symbol would be a tremendous benefit for facilitating research on the sound."

The IPA Council voted in favour of the adoption of a symbol for the sound. Following discussion and a further vote of Council, the symbol adopted was the 'right-hook v' **V** which combines a 'v' and a fish-hook 'r' suggesting a voiced labiodental sound and a tap/flap articulation.

The labiodental flap will be included in the next edition of the IPA chart; it will also be incorporated in Unicode and included in the SIL fonts.

Katerina Nicolaidis
Secretary

2 August 2005