Subject: Feedback on the proposal L2/12-169 for Link Signs
From: Shriramana Sharma <samjnaa@gmail.com>
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To: Unicode Editorial Committee <l2doc@unicode.org>
CC: Karl Pentzlin <karl-pentzlin@acssoft.de>

This is regarding the proposal L2/12-169 for External and Internal Link Signs.

The older proposal L2/06-268 only asked for the EXTERNAL LINK SIGN but the current edition has included an INTERNAL LINK SIGN also.

However the glyphic difference between the two is very small, especially considering the small point sizes that these characters, as part of web textual content, are likely to be rendered in. Encoding a second character would in my opinion defeat the purpose of the first character viz to differentiate external links from internal links.

Further there is only one attestation provided for the INTERNAL LINK SIGN, against many attestations (with slight deviations on the same theme of an arrow going out of a rectangle) for the EXTERNAL LINK SIGN. As such, unlike in the case of the EXTERNAL LINK SIGN, it cannot be claimed that this particular representation for the INTERNAL LINK SIGN is widely accepted or standardized.

IMO it is obvious why an INTERNAL LINK SIGN has not been de facto standardized, simply because it is only the EXTERNAL LINK SIGN that is required due to legal implications, and there are no legal implications when you travel from one page on a website to another page on the same website. Therefore, the INTERNAL LINK SIGN graphic on the single example provided is superfluous.

Thus given that the additional encoding of the INTERNAL LINK SIGN would defeat the purpose of encoding the EXTERNAL LINK SIGN, which is the important one that is required due to legal implications, I recommend that no additional INTERNAL LINK SIGN be encoded.

Often we see a liberal attitude and towards encoding, and so many "potential use" characters have been encoded because of that. That of course increases the utility of Unicode in many cases, but in this case, I feel that the INTERNAL LINK SIGN should not be permitted due to the above reasons.

If at all, if the glyph shape is sufficiently changed so as to highlight the difference between it and the EXTERNAL LINK SIGN, perhaps by the arrow pointing to the bottom-right within the same box, it may be encoded.

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Shriramana Sharma