

Request to change Annotation of U+11FEC and U+11FED in Tamil Supplementary Block

Naga Ganesan (naa.ganesan@gmail.com)

1.0 Introduction After many years I initiated the encoding of archaic and unused symbols of Tamil, a new Supplementary block for fractions and symbols has become part of the Unicode standard (Version 12.0). Any old symbol if found can be added by new proposals in the future in this supplement block while leaving Tamil block in BMP untouched. <https://www.unicode.org/charts/PDF/U11FC0.pdf>

This document requests to change a letter in the annotations for U+11FEC and U+11FED.

2.0 Tamil Letter K (க) in between vowels

Tamil letter k(க) when it occurs between two vowels has two sounds, either as a sort of -h- or as a sort of -g- (see R.E. Asher, 1985). So whenever intervocalical K (க) occurs in Tamil words, Tamil character names in Tamil supplement block use only -k- and not -g- or -h-. This can be seen in (a) U+11FE0 with VARAAKAN in its character name, and also in (b) U+11FF1 with VAKAIYARAA. Note that in both U+11FE0 and U+11FF1, letter -k- is used instead of -g- for க between vowels.

The reason for this is explained by Dr. Vasu Ranganathan, University of Pennsylvania, a Tamil linguist as well as Chair, INFITT in L2/14-212 <http://www.unicode.org/L2/L2014/14212-tamil-names.pdf>

It can be observed that INFITT in L2/14-212 has requested to use (i) “poka” as annotation for U+11FEC and (ii) “aaka” as annotation for U+11FED.

TAMIL PRONOUNCIATION SOUNDS OF VALLINAM LETTERS, க (k) & க் (c) by R. E. Asher (1985)

From pages, 211 – 212, Prof. R. E. Asher, Croom Helm Descriptive Grammars, TAMIL, 1985, U.K. (Ref. : L2/15=003)

3.1.2.1.1. Plosives and affricates

(1) k

[k] voiceless dorso-velar plosive in utterance-initial position (word-initial k- which is not utterance-initial is sometimes realised as a more laxly articulated consonant): e.g. kuṭu 'give(imp)' [kəṭə]. In this position there may be slight, nondistinctive, aspiration;

[k:] long voiceless dorso-velar plosive as the realisation of the intervocalic sequence -kk-: e.g. pakkam 'side' [pak:ɔ̃]. In rapid speech the closure may be shorter than the duration suggested by the length mark, but the consonant will always be a stop and voiceless;

[x] voiceless dorso-velar fricative in intervocalic position: makan 'son' [max̃]. In other dialects a glottal fricative, [h] or [ɦ], occurs in this position;

[g] voiced dorso-velar plosive occurs medially in the sequence -ṅk-: vaṅku 'buy' [va:ṅgi];

(2) c

[tʃ] voiceless lamino-palatoalveolar affricate in utterance-initial position in a few words: e.g. cantiran 'moon' [tʃaṅṅir̃], cantanam 'sandalwood paste' [tʃaṅṅəñ], caṭṇi 'chutney' [tʃaṭṇi], cil 'exclamation expressive of disgust or contempt' [tʃi:] (though note the alternative pronunciations [si:tʃi:] and [tʃi:tʃi:] in the reduplicated form of this, cilicil);

212

[tʃ̣] voiceless lamino-palatoalveolar affricate with the stop element potentially slightly prolonged, as the realisation of the intervocalic sequence -cc-: pacce 'green' [patʃ̣e];

[s] voiceless lamino-alveolar fricative in (i) intervocalic position: paci 'hunger' [paṣi], kocu 'mosquito' [koṣə], and (ii) word-initial position: cante 'market' [saṅṅe], collu 'say' [sol:ə]. In words such as those referred to in (ii), initial c- is for some speakers realised as the affricate in certain grammatical environments, most important of which (in terms of frequency) are preceding accusative case, preceding dative case, and preceding adverb in -aa. Lack of pause at such word junctures is a necessary condition of the articulation of [tʃ̣]. An alternative to [s] in some dialects is voiceless lamino-postalveolar fricative [ʃ̣];

[dʒ] voiced lamino-palatoalveolar affricate occurs medially in the sequence -ṅc-: neṅcu 'heart' [neṅdʒi], oṅṅcutu 'it broke' [oṅṅdʒiṅṅi];

[ʃ] voiceless apico-palatal fricative when preceded by a retroflex stop: kaṭci '(political) party' [kaṭʃi], veṭci 'name of a shrub' [veṭʃi]. For such words there is an alternative, probably more common, pronunciation with a voiceless lamino-palatoalveolar affricate: [katʃ̣i], [veṭʃ̣i], for which the appropriate broad transcription would be kacc̣i and

3.0 Request to change Annotation of U+11FEC and U+11FED

In the Tamil supplementary block, U+11FEC has the annotation as “poga”, and U+11FED has the annotation as “aaga”. For consistency in Tamil Supplement block, these annotations need to be corrected. In order to be consistent with the names such as U+11FE0 (VARAAKAN) and U+11FF1 (VAKAIYARAA), it is requested that

- (i) U+11FEC has the annotation as “poka”
- (ii) U+11FED has the annotation as “aaka”

Thanks.