

Addendum to Unicode requests for IPA modifier letters, L2/20-252 pulmonic and L2/20-253 non-pulmonic

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Earlier this year we split a proposal for modifier IPA letters in two, with non-pulmonic consonants separated out because the nature of our argument for them was purely theoretical. Unlike the pulmonic letters, we had no evidence of actual use of superscript IPA click or implosive letters, and we requested them for completeness of Unicode coverage of the IPA and for potential need. However, we have now found published attestation of modifier click letters. We have also found additional evidence of pulmonic modifiers that had minimal attestation.

In their chapter on aberrant speech, Kelly & Local (1989) give the following transcriptions. They are taken from field notes rather than being artificially contrived.

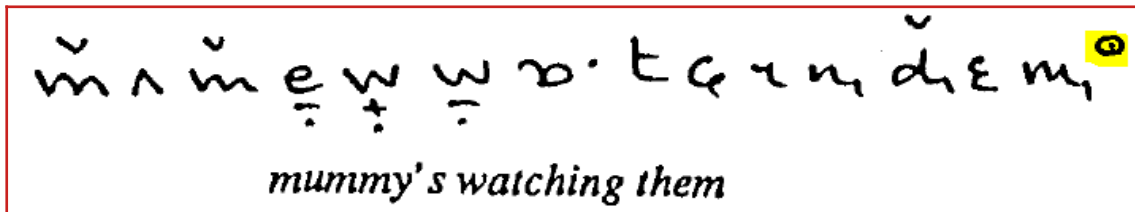


Figure 1. Kelly & Local (1989: 193, 196) ends in a light bilabial click release, proposed U+107B5 <°>, matching the place of articulation of the final bilabial consonant [m].

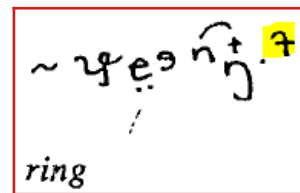
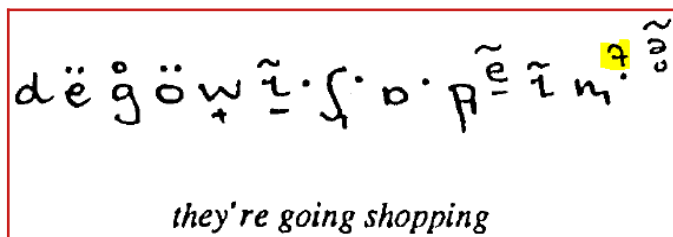


Figure 2. Kelly & Local (1989: 194, 154). The utterances end in a light dental click release <¹>, matching the places of articulation of the final consonants [ŋ] and [ŋ̠].

We requested the bilabial click <°> seen in Figure 1 as U+107B5. The dental click <¹> seen in Figure 2 is the pre-Kiel IPA letter <₁>, whereas in proposal L2/20-253 we requested a modifier variant of the current IPA letter <|> at U+107B6. We are not adding modifier <¹> to our proposal now, but present it as supporting evidence that clicks or click-like sounds may indeed be transcribed with semantically distinct modifier letters. We plan to request modifier variants of the pre-Kiel click letters <¹³ c f>, along with other obsolete and para-IPA letters, in a future Unicode proposal, after the IPA Council has had time to more fully discuss the scope of that request.

In our sub-proposal for pulmonic letters as well, there were some modifiers with only minimal attestation, and some of these are found in Kelly & Local (1989).

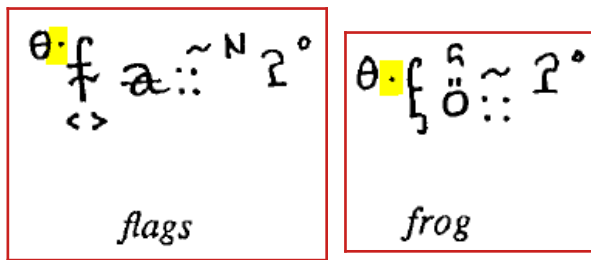


Figure 3. Kelly & Local (1989: 39, 42), with modifier half-length sign, proposed U+10782 <^>, in transcription of a child in speech therapy.

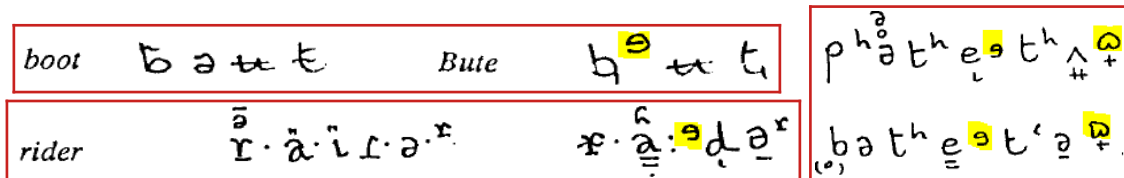


Figure 4. Kelly & Local (1989: 139, 159, 175), showing proposed U+1078E <^> is not an error for existing <^>. Also proposed U+107A4 <^>.

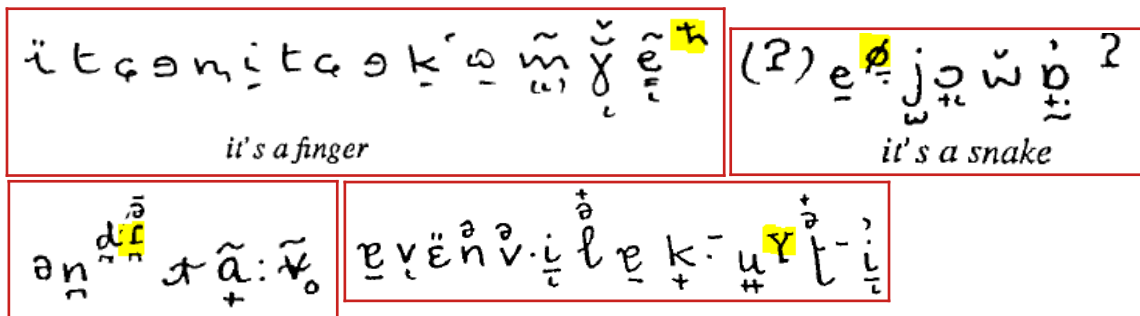


Figure 5. Kelly & Local (1989: 115, 120, 166, 172) with proposed U+10795 <^h>, U+107A2 <^>, U+107A9 <^r> and U+107B2 <^y>.

Reference

John Kelly & John Local (1989) *Doing Phonology: Observing, Recording, Interpreting*. Manchester University Press.