Comments on Revised proposal to encode the Lampung script in Unicode

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COMMENTS

1. NAME FOR LAMPUNG VOWEL SIGN EA

In the proposal, the name LAMPUNG VOWEL SIGN EA for vowel sign /a/ is used to distinguish it from the vowel sign /e/ (LAMPUNG VOWEL SIGN E).

Unfortunately, this naming concept makes readers from Indonesia confused because grapheme ⟨EA⟩ has never been used to write phoneme /a/ in Indonesia. In Indonesia, this phoneme is usually written using grapheme ⟨ê⟩.

Figure 1. The word "Jepang" /dʒəˈpaŋ/ (Japan) in Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia. Note that the phoneme /a/ is written as ⟨ê⟩.

The naming of vowel sign /a/ and /e/ in Unicode—especially Indonesian scripts—is also inconsistent and has the potential to make the reader use the vowel signs mistakenly.

Figure 2. Names for vowel sign /e/ and /a/ in several Indonesian script blocks (L2/20-284R).

To prevent misreading and confusion/ambiguity, I suggest changing the name to LAMPUNG VOWEL SIGN E BICEK for vowel sign /a/ and LAMPUNG VOWEL SIGN E for vowel sign /e/.

2. PUNCTUATION SIGNS AND DIGITS

2.1. Punctuation signs

In 1985, a group of traditional Lampung leaders gathered to "standardize" the Lampung script. One of their decisions was to make 4 fictitious punctuation marks adapted from Latin...
punctuation marks: full stop, comma, exclamation sign, and question sign. **There’s no quotation mark.**

These four punctuation marks are always present in government books until now. These new punctuation marks are also widely taught in schools in Lampung province. In the Links to: [Lampung language syllabus and lesson plan for 5th grade](#), for example, one of the learning objectives is "Skilled in writing Lampung script (consonants, vowels and punctuation marks) correctly."

- I suggest encoding 4 new punctuation marks: LAMPUNG FULL STOP, LAMPUNG COMMA, LAMPUNG EXCLAMATION MARK and LAMPUNG QUESTION MARK together with 2 traditional LAMPUNG START OF TEXT SIGN and LAMPUNG END OF TEXT SIGN. The four punctuation marks have been well *Lampungified* and stable in the last 37 years ago.

- I suggest changing the representative glyphs of five punctuation marks to better suit the textual/actual form. Below is my correction:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NEW PUNCTUATION MARKS</th>
<th>government published books</th>
<th>Revised proposal</th>
<th>Correction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aksara dan Naskah</strong></td>
<td><strong>Tata Bahasa</strong></td>
<td><strong>Kamus Dwi Bahasa</strong></td>
<td><strong>Revised proposal</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kuno Lampung</strong></td>
<td><strong>Bahasa Lampung</strong></td>
<td><strong>Indonesia—Lampung Dialek</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dalam Pandangan</strong></td>
<td><strong>Dialek Pesisir</strong></td>
<td><strong>Way Kanan Edisi Revisi</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Masyarakat</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lampung Kini</strong> (1996)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lampung Kini</strong> (1992)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beradu</strong></td>
<td><strong>Kuma</strong></td>
<td><strong>Seru</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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1 Because these are new fictitious characters, I used government books as the primary source.
2.2. Digits

Since the first, Lampung script does not have its own digits. It is very common for us to find Lampung script written together with Arabic numerals.

Western Arabic numeral on *Kitab Kuntara Raja Niti*, 19th century

Inked date on announcement letter: *11 Yuni 1913* (11 June 1913).

*Bandar Dewa* bronze inscription, 19th century.
In 1985, a group of traditional Lampung leaders gathered to "standardize" the Lampung script. Until the gathering ended, there was no decision regarding new Lampung numerals. They just decided to make four new punctuation marks. Government books also only contain new punctuation marks, not numerals.

Suddenly someone created Lampung numerals and inscribed it on stone inscriptions then placed it next to the main stone inscription at the Lampung Museum. The obscurity of Lampung numeral’s origins causes schools to have different policies. There are schools that teach Lampung numerals, but many also don't teach Lampung numerals.

There is indeed the existence of Lampung numbers. But its use is very little. Even educators and the government itself still use Arabic numerals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lampung Numerals</th>
<th>Arabic Numerals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Lampung Numeral Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Arabic Numeral Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework²</td>
<td>Homework³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image4.png" alt="Schoolpaper Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image6.png" alt="Stone inscription Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image7.png" alt="Building Sign Image" /></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

² [https://twitter.com/ohncdjeno_/status/1416328677332197383?t=sVjWfH-vCXQkgwARqlWKg&s=19](https://twitter.com/ohncdjeno_/status/1416328677332197383?t=sVjWfH-vCXQkgwARqlWKg&s=19)
³ [https://twitter.com/petitawl/status/1483818524149952133?c=hc7_cUtp2iqnTFNf9ekbw&s=19](https://twitter.com/petitawl/status/1483818524149952133?c=hc7_cUtp2iqnTFNf9ekbw&s=19)
⁴ [https://twitter.com/keliackreman/status/1486509365045579778?gj=QS27Jg5W5rsi9vEcp1A&s=19](https://twitter.com/keliackreman/status/1486509365045579778?gj=QS27Jg5W5rsi9vEcp1A&s=19)
⁵ [https://twitter.com/nakayupi/status/1491256974847377408?EmCNLzIio24SWZGgsg5DQ&s=19](https://twitter.com/nakayupi/status/1491256974847377408?EmCNLzIio24SWZGgsg5DQ&s=19)
Therefore, I suggest providing 10 reserved codepoints for future Lampung numerals encoding (not encoding them for now). Further socialization and discussions need to be carried out by local governments, philologists, educators, and local related parties to resolve this issue.

3. REPRESENTATIVE GLYPHS

3.1. Core letters

Just like the Lampung language, the Lampung script also evolved. The current form of the Lampung script is the form commonly used in the early 20th century when the Dutch East Indies government often used this script for official use. Official usage makes the use of variations of the Lampung script begin to decline and move towards a standard form. Below is a table of examples of the evolution of the forms of some consonants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter</th>
<th>18th century</th>
<th>19th century</th>
<th>Current Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bandar Dewa</td>
<td>Hollé’s chart</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>manuscript</td>
<td>1913</td>
<td>1932 Appointment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sa</td>
<td></td>
<td>Announcement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ta</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Da</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ma</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ja</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Etc.

Since the evolution is quite sequential, the representative glyphs for core letters do not need to be changed.

3.2. Signs

My attention is drawn to 3 consonant signs: rejunjung, datas, and keleniah.

In Lampung script towards the 20th century, there is a common pattern: when datas is written horizontally, then keleniah is also written horizontally, and vice versa. The consonant sign
rehunjung is always a small version of LAMPUNG LETTER LA. Here’s the evidence:

Figure 3. Chart from Holle 1882: 19, 20.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples of the rehunjung form in manuscripts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Library Mss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malay 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples of the datas and keleniah forms in manuscripts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image6.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913 Announcement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TA HU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RAH HAN</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I suggest changing representative glyphs:

- **Keleniah** (LAMPUNG FINAL CONSONANT SIGN H) from �/mainwindowodynamo.png to �/mainwindowodynamo.png  because of the proposal uses horizontal datas ( ).

- **Rehunjung** (LAMPUNG FINAL CONSONANT SIGN R) from �/mainwindowodynamo.png to �mainwindowodynamo.png  .
4. ORTHOGRAPHIC VARIATIONS OF CVC

The revised proposal overemphasizes the reader that the diacritics should be stacked horizontally and sequentially (CVC).

When a multiple signs with the same position attach to a base, the graphical positioning of signs follows the logical input order: vowel signs, then final consonants to the right. In the same of two vowel signs, the logical order is preserved in the graphical display.

Figure 4. Description regarding horizontal alignment of multiple diacritics.

In fact, Lampung script have variations in how to stack and sort diacritics.


Most manuscripts from the past have instead used a horizontal stacking order of CCV. The author needs to add this fact to his proposal.

5. DIFFERENCES WITH REJANG SCRIPT

What makes Rejang and Lampung script different is not the difference in letterform (angularity vs roundedness). We need to remember that from the past, Lampung script has Angular and Rounded shapes.
Figure 5. Angular Lampung. Illustration from Haarlem printing company Joh. Enschedé anniversary publication, produced on their 150th anniversary in 1893. Lampung letters by JA Schmidlin.

Figure 6. Rounded Lampung. A manuscript titled “Inilah surat pantun cara Lampung” containing Arabic Malay and Lampung script, dated 1812. (British Library, Mss Malay 4).

Scholars since the Dutch East Indies era have identified them separately (revised proposal, p. 27 & 34). This is like the relationship between Javanese and Balinese scripts which are similar but are two different scripts. Also, Rejang’s customs, language and culture are separate from those of Lampung. This difference makes Lampung script has its own uniqueness. The pride of the Lampung script also made this script used as an official script by the Dutch East Indies government in Lampung when at the same time the government replaced the Rejang script
with Malay Arabic script in Central Sumatra.

The gap between two scripts has widened after Indonesia’s independence. Another thing that currently distinguishes the Lampung script and the Rejang script is the euphoria of its users. Based on the 2010 Population Census, 64% of Lampung’s population are Javanese, only 13% are Lampung natives.

Even so, the provincial government and the city/regency governments are very concerned about Lampung culture, including the script. Many legal products have been produced to protect Lampung culture, including:

1. Lampung Governor Regulation No. 4 of 2011 on Development, Guidance, Preservation of Lampung Language and Lampung Script
2. Lampung Governor Regulation No. 39 of 2014 on Lampung Language and Script as Compulsory Subjects at Primary and Secondary Education Levels
3. Central Lampung Regent Regulation No. 8 of 2015 on Lampung Culture Preservation and Maintenance, Article 7 (Lampung language, literature, and script as elements of cultural wealth shall be taught and preserved.)
4. Metro City Ordinance No. 8 of 2017 on Lampung Culture Preservation and Maintenance, Article 25 (Lampung language and literature shall be taught at the elementary to junior high school level.)
5. Bandar Lampung City Ordinance No. 2 of 2019 on Preservation of Lampung Culture and Traditions, Article 12 (Lampung language, literature, and script as elements of cultural wealth shall be taught and preserved.)

and many more regulations that may not have been uploaded to the Legal Documentation and Information Network (JDIH). The community is also active in preserving and using this script, even though they are not native Lampung people. We can easily find young people posting Lampung script on SNS, even mocking certain web pages so that the web page is written using Lampung script. This is different from the Rejang script, which is currently stagnant, and even its users continue to decline. The last legal product regarding the Rejang script is Lebong Regency Ordinance No. 4 of 2013 on Ka Ga Nga Script.
6. **SOUND VALUE OF LAMPUNG LETTER RA AND GHA**

Simply put, the letter indeed represents a proto-Lampungic *r sound. But as noted by Udin (1992) and Anderbeck (2007:14–15), there are various phonetic realizations of /r/ within the dialects of Lampungic cluster, usually a velar or uvular fricative (/x/, /ɣ/, /χ/, or /ʁ/). Considering this, the **sound value of LAMPUNG LETTER RA and LAMPUNG FINAL CONSONANT SIGN R should be clarified more accurately as /r/, /x/, /χ/, /ɣ/, /ʁ/**.

This is supported by manuscript evidence. This is one example ([Joh. Enschedé en Zonen, 1907:43]:

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[Wat saj xadʒa di pakan Baydat galaxni xadʒa Harunarrasit]
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“There is a king in the land of Baghdad, his name is King Harun ar-Rashid.”

The same is still applied in modern times. People still use LAMPUNG LETTER RA and LAMPUNG FINAL CONSONANT SIGN R for the sound value of /x/ and /ɣ/. An example of its use can be seen in the government heraldries:

That’s LETTER RA reads as /xa/.

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Another example:

https://twitter.com/rara_chantiqa/status/1269265412899762178?t=QFW9eUrQQatM0PLv2_HnUg&s=19

Look at the picture above. LAMPUNG LETTER RA and LAMPUNG FINAL CONSONANT SIGN R reads /x/ or /ɣ/.

This leaves the question: what is the essence of LAMPUNG LETTER GHA/GRA's existence? Documentation from scholars in the Dutch East Indies era did not find the existence of the letter GHA (p. 27—35). The manuscripts made by the colonial government also do not contain this letter. The letter appears for the first time in the Sumatran Almanac (1969). And finally, this letter is included in the 20 main letters of the “standardization” results.

The government says that LAMPUNG LETTER GHA reads /ɣ/.

The first sentence reads, “The letter gh is read like the letter ئ (IPA: ɣ) in Arabic.” (Kamus Lampung—Indonesia (1985)).
But in practice, the government itself does not provide examples of the application of this script. The people of Lampung are also inconsistent in using this letter (often confused with LAMPUNG LETTER RA and LAMPUNG FINAL CONSONANT SIGN R). The traditional elders also did not indicate which manuscripts this letter came from.

I suggest not encoding LAMPUNG LETTER GHA due to the ambiguity of the primary source and the overlapping use with LAMPUNG LETTER RA and LAMPUNG FINAL CONSONANT SIGN R. Unless the proposal writer manages to prove that this letter has indeed been used in the past.
The term was coined by Mervyn A. Jaspan (1926-1975), an anthropologist at the University of Hull, to refer not only to Surat Ulu, but to all descendants of the Brahmi script (http://archive.org/details/folkliteratureof00maja).

**Almanak Sumatera Terbitan of 1969**


**Page 26**

Figure 8: The Lampung script as used in 1969, shown in the *Almanak Sumatera Terbitan*. This was the basis for the standard script developed in 1985. Image courtesy of Febri Muhammad.

Correction: *Almanak Sumatera Terbitan 1969* or *Almanak Sumatera*.

**Page 42**

Figure 25: An emblem of South Lampung Regency with the phrase “kagom mufakat” inscribed in the Lampung script.

Correction:
Figure 25: An emblem of South Lampung Regency with the phrase [xagom mapakat] (actually *ragom mufakat*) inscribed in the Lampung script.

**Page 43**

Figure 26: An emblem of the city of Lampung with the phrase “ragom gawi” (actually *ragom gawa*) inscribed in the Lampung script.

Correction:
Figure 26: An emblem of Bandar Lampung City with the phrase “ragom gawi” inscribed in the Lampung script.

Figure 27: An emblem of the metro transport of Lampung with the phrase “bumi sai wawai” inscribed in the Lampung script.

Correction:
Figure 27: An emblem of Metro City (one of the cities in Lampung province) with the phrase “bumi sai wawai” inscribed in the Lampung script.
Letter of appointment of the village head (*penghulu*) in Lampung and Latin script using Malay (1932). Credit: Adi Sanjaya
An announcement made by the head of the Pasar Madang under-district in Malay and the old Lampung script (11 June 1913).