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Dear Dr. Nicolaidis:

I would like to make a formal request for the Council of the International Phonetic Association to vote on the adoption of a symbol for the labiodental flap. If it is necessary for a member of the Council to make such a proposal, then Professor Peter Ladefoged (to whom I have sent a copy of this letter) has agreed to formally propose a vote on this matter.

Recent 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. See Olson & Hajek (1999, 2003, 2004) for detailed discussion of these points.

Concerning a symbol for the sound, I would propose the use of a *hooktop* v : $\langle v \rangle$. This symbol is a roman character that combines a $\langle v \rangle$ (suggesting a voiced labiodental sound) with a *fish-hook* r $\langle r \rangle$ (suggesting a tap or flap articulation). This symbol was originally suggested to me by Dr. Geoffrey Pullum.

Please let me know if you have any questions concerning this proposal. You may reach me by email at Ken_Olson@sil.org, by phone at +1 (972) 708-7400, ext. 2281, or at the address listed above.

Kind regards,

Kenneth S. Olson

References

- Olson, Kenneth S., and John Hajek (1999) The phonetic status of the labial flap. *Journal of the International Phonetic Association* 29(2): 101-114.
Olson, Kenneth S., and John Hajek (2003) Crosslinguistic insights on the labial flap. *Linguistic Typology* 7(2): 157-186.
Olson, Kenneth S., and John Hajek (2004) A crosslinguistic lexicon of the labial flap. *Linguistic Discovery* 2(2): 21-57. Online. URL: <http://linguistic-discovery.dartmouth.edu>.