

ISO/IEC JTC1/SC2/WG2 N4112

Ad hoc report on Naxi Dongba

SOURCE: Tero Aalto, CSC – IT Center for Science

DATE: 7-8 June 2011

LOCATION: Finnish Standards Association SFS, Helsinki, Finland

PARTICIPANTS:

Tero Aalto (Finland)  
Deborah Anderson (USA)  
Chen Zhuang (China)  
Peter Constable (USA)  
Michael Everson (Ireland)  
He Lifeng (China)  
Mikami Yoshiki (Japan)  
Karl Pentzlin (Germany)  
Sekiguchi Masahiro (Japan)  
Wei Lin Mei (TCA)  
Ken Whistler (USA)  
Zhao Qinglian (China)

The discussion in the ad hoc group was based on the following documents:

- N3935 - Revised Proposal for Encoding Naxi Dongba Pictograph in the SMP of the UCS (preliminary)
  - N3965 – Comments on Revised Proposal for Encoding Naxi Dongba Pictograph in the SMP
- N4043 - Revised Proposal for Encoding Naxi Dongba Pictographic script
  - N4060 - Comments on Proposal for encoding Naxi Dongba Pictographic script
    - N4097 - Response to US Comments in N4060 on Naxi Dongba

Five outstanding issues were identified during the submission and commenting process. Two of those had already been resolved in the most recent response document (N4097). First of all, the character names had been changed to include the script name, as suggested in N4060. Secondly, the font was observed to meet the technical requirements. Licensing problems were neither foreseen because of previous collaboration with the same provider.

The main question remaining was to find in-line print examples of the script to serve as evidence to justify its encoding. The proposal also did not specify whether the proposal's intent was to represent the traditional script or to standardize a new writing system for modern use. Modern use was deemed primary and support for traditional texts not necessary.

The ordering of the proposed characters was also discussed. The proposal introduces the characters in alphabetical order based on the romanized forms. However, the traditional

ordering used in the most prominent dictionaries is by shape and concept. The traditional ordering had also originally been used in the encoding project. Ideographic scripts in the UCS are usually ordered according to radicals and strokes because a single character can have several pronunciations in different languages. However, Naxi Dongba is only used to write the Naxi language, and each character can only have one pronunciation. This is also the case in the historical scope.

The question of stacking raised in N4060 is not relevant because, in modern use, characters only appear in a linear manner.

The ad hoc group arrived at the following conclusions:

- China is requested to revise the contribution to include examples of Naxi Dongba in modern use in books, newspapers and magazines.
- The revised contribution is to specify that the encoding initiative is aimed to facilitate modern use and that support for traditional use is not necessary.
- The revised contribution, when received, will be considered in the next meeting.