

Universal Multiple-Octet Coded Character Set
(UCS)

ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC 2/WG 2 N3161
Date: 2006-09-22

Source: China
Title: Opinions on N3121-Lanna script
Action: To be considered by WG 2
Status:
Distribution: ISO/IEC JTC1/SC2/WG 2

Chinese Experts Opinions on N3121

In general, Chinese Experts consider that the proposal N3121 needs to be revised and supplemented.

I. The following is our opinions on the introduction part of the proposal:

- The Lanna characters and the Tai Lue characters used in Xishuangbanna and other area of China are both characters used for writing Buddhism scriptures in Bali language. They are developed on the basis of the same characters. Keeping the tradition of scripture characters and the origin of Buddhism scriptures in Bali language, the Tai Lue could write the Buddhism scriptures in Bali language perfectly. There for, no matter in China, Thailand of Laos, the Tai Lue are taken as “characters of scriptures”. It is the most oldest characters for writing Buddhism scriptures.
- After the Thailand was united, the Bangkok dynasty began to promote the use of the national character, the Thai characters. For hundreds of years, the areas used to use the Thai are still using it. The religion area used to use the traditional characters also turned to use the Thai. Nowadays, the Buddhism temples in the North of Thailand all use the Thai characters to write the scriptures. There are few scriptures written in Lanna, and the people who can read and write the Lanna is few, either. So, Lanna character actually is a “dead


characters” in Thailand.

While the Tai Lue has been using since it was created. Before the 50's of the 20 century, the Tai Lue is widely used by the government, the religion and the folk. After the 50's, the traditional Tai Lue is used in the religion area. A lot of Dai people are trained to read and write Tai Lue. There is Tai Lue subject in the Yunnan Nationality University which aims to train professionals. In recent years, the Xishuangbanna prefectural government is supporting on translating and publishing the corpus of Buddhism scriptures written in Tai Lue on bamboo. All these showed that the Tai Lue has a very good environment to use. There are professionals grasp the Tai Lue and they are studying on it. Putting the Tai Lue aside to code the Lanna is not appropriate.

- Concerning the name of the proposal, our opinion is that it should be “the old Tai Lue”. According to the linguists who study the Chinese languages and characters, “ To Tai Lue ” or “ To Tai” is used instead of Lanna in the north area of Thailand and Laos where use the characters. We will discuss more about it with experts.




II. For the proposal N3121 itself, we consider that it mixed with the characters we had coded in N 2845 on New Tai Lue. As stated before, New Tai Lue is improved on the basis of traditional Tai Lue. Many New Tai Lue characters are the traditional one. So when we code the traditional Tai Lue or Lanna, we should not

include them.

III. N3121 missed some characters, especially the variant forms of the characters which share the same phoneme. For example, the high tone group SA (HIGH SA), the characters in N3121 had been coded in New Tai Lue, but the variants  are not included in this proposal. The three characters have different meaning and different way to use. There are more examples like this. We will not list them here one by one.

IV. In the old Tai Lue there are many additive signs which have the function of combining with the consonant and changing the consonant into another consonant. These kinds of additive signs play an important role in the old Tai Lue. Also they have their own names. But they are not collected in the proposal N3121.

These additive signs are:

- The sign  named [jɔ⁴¹hɔi¹³]. It can combine with the consonants , making them have the function of compound consonant.
- The signs named [ha:ŋ⁵⁵], such as . They can combine separately with many characters and make new consonants.

V. The consonant used as the final. Many consonant can be taken as signs and used under the single vowel or put in the end of the vowel to compose consonants with final. This kind of consonants

include: ਬ , ਭ , ਛ , ਝ , ਞ , ਟ , ਠ , ਡ , ਢ , ਣ , ਙ

ਤ , ਥ , ਦ , ਧ