

Doc Type: Working Group Document
Title: Discussion and proposal of default Lisu sort order
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1. Introduction. Lisu was recently added to the BMP of the Unicode Standard. As part of its inclusion it is necessary to come up with a default sort order. This paper examines the various sorted orders for Lisu that are in existence and the discussions that have occurred on the topic among the Lisu themselves.

2. Sort Orders. Here we list the sort orders that are known.

Modern:

&[first regular] < . < , < .. < . , < : < ; < _ < ' < B < P < P < D < D < T < T < G < K < K < J < C < C < Z < F < F < M
< N < L < S < R < R < V < V < H < G < J < X < B < W < Y < A < A < E < E < I < O < U < U < T < D
&-. < =

This is the most modern sort order and is the revision that has been requested by nearly all the Lisu to be the default sort order for Lisu. We will examine the implementation of this order later. The order differs from the traditional order in that the semi-vowels are moved to the end of the consonants and before the vowels.

Traditional:

&[first regular] < . < , < .. < . , < : < ; < _ < ' < B < P < P < D < D < T < T < G < K < K < J < C < C < Z < F < F < M
< N < L < S < R < R < V < V < H < G < J < W < X < Y < B < A < A < E < E < I < O < U < U < T < D
&-. < =

This is the traditional sort order used by most of the Lisu in and outside China. The tones reflect the simple falling order as taught in the song they sing to learn them.

Language Commission:

&[first regular] < . < , < .. < . , < : < ; < _ < ' < B < P < P < D < D < T < T < G < K < K < J < C < C < Z < F < F < M
< N < L < S < R < R < V < V < H < G < J < W < X < Y < B < A < A < E < E < I < O < U < U < T < D
&-. < =

This sort order differs from the traditional order by switching the relative order of two tones. It reflects the usage of a small (<10%) subgroup of the Lisu in China.

Archaic:

&[first regular] < . < , < .. < . , < : < ; < _ < ' < B < P < P < D < D < T < T < G < K < K < J < C < C < Z < F < F < M
< N < L < S < R < R < V < V < H < G < J < W < X < Y < A < A < E < E < I < O < U < U < T < D < B
&-. < =

This sort order is no longer used but may be found in some early books. It differs from the traditional order in considering gha to be a vowel.

3. Discussion. While children learn the alphabetical order in school, sorting tends most to be used by

those using computers, which results in the most interest coming from the younger generation. The reasoning for the preference for the modern sort order as the default for Unicode is: We get one go at this, we may as well take the opportunity to get the sort order right. Hence all the Lisu inside China, with the exception of the group based around the Language Commission, and all those outside have unanimously agreed that they want the modern sort order to be the default in Unicode.

4. Implementation. For the modern sort to fit with the rest of Unicode, certain characters have to take their current sort positions. Of these, only two characters are so fixed. U+02CD and U+02BC. It so happens that these two, by default, take the correct order. It is also noticeable that of all the characters in the Lisu sort order, it is these two that are often ignored in discussions and are felt to be OK wherever they end up.

Thus we have:

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&[before 1] _ < . < , < .. < . , < : < < ;  
&' < B < P < P < D < T < T < G < K < K < J < C < C < Z < F < F < M < N < L < S < R < R < V < V < H < G < J  
< X < B < W < Y < A < A < E < E < I < O < U < U < L < D  
&-. < =
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