2010-03-26

Universal Multiple-Octet Coded Character Set International Organization for Standardization Organisation Internationale de Normalisation

Международная организация по стандартизации

Doc Type: Working Group Document

Title: Final proposal for encoding the Miao script in the SMP of the UCS

Source: China, Ireland, and UK Status: National Body Contribution

Action: For consideration by JTC1/SC2/WG2 and UTC

Replaces: N3669, N3730, N3761

Date: 2010-03-26

1. Introduction. Miao is the short name of the Lao Miaowen script. There are many Miao orthographies, but most use Latin letters and do not pose any character encoding concerns. The Miao script was created by the Englishman Samuel Pollard, Miao people Wang Mingji, John Zhang, and James Yang, as well as Han intellectual Stephen Lee during 1904 at Stone Gateway, Weining County, western Guizhou Province, China. It adopted some Cree graphemes, some Latin letter variants, some English shorthand characters, as well as some Miao pictographs. The main principle is to represent initials (usually consonants) with larger letters, finals (mostly vowels) with smaller letters, and with tones represented by various placement of the small letters relative to the big letter. This system is simple to use, but many Chinese scholars thought that the few phonological tone positions cannot completely express the many phonetic tones of the Miao language. Also, it was a challenge to set lead type with these letters. Therefore, in the early 1950s Yang Rongxin and other Miao people from Weining in Guizhou attempted a reform by designing tone marks and designating the bottom-right position of the big letter as the only tone mark position. This reform did not see much support from the Miao people. Later Miao people from Kunming City and Chuxiong Prefecture adopted Yang Rongxin's approach and devised what they called the Normalised writing system. Therefore, the Miao script is comprised of two orthographic styles. Since both systems are in current use, this encoding proposal covers both tone marking systems of the Miao script.

Originally, this script was mainly used by the Northeastern Yunnan Miao. Later, various other Miao dialects began to use it as well. In addition, some people from the Yi, and the Lisu nationalities in Luquan, Yunnan also use this script to write their languages. The estimated user population of the multiple language groups is between 200,000 and 500,000. Extensive literature, bilingual education materials and elementary textbooks have been published in the Miao Script.

2. Structure. The Miao script is written from left to right. Used for tonal languages, Miao divides each syllable into an initial and a final. The initial is usually the initial consonant (or consonant cluster) and the final consists of the vowel cluster and the tone. Nasalization and voicing can be considered as qualities of the whole syllable and are marked on the initial rather than the final. Nasalization is marked by a noncombining letter; asipration is a combining mark. In Chuxiong style Ahmao orthography, a vowel is written on the baseline, followed by a tone mark; in most orthographies, the vowel is written at different heights and positions (above, top-right, right, bottom-right, below) indication the tone.

The syllable structure is: $(N)C(M)V^{+}(S/T)$, where N is the nasalizer, C is the obligatory consonant, M is a modifier (there is an aspiration mark in current use and two archaic voicing marks), V is one obligatory

vowel mark which may be followed by others, S is a "shifting" character which controls the height of the vowel (all vowels being moved to the same height and position), and T is a tone mark; S and T do not cooccur on a syllable.

- **3. Punctuation and digits.** Users of the Miao script freely employ punctuation marks from both Chinese and Latin scripts. No new encodings for punctuation are required. European digits are used.
- **4. Line breaking and word breaking.** Line breaks occur in place of spaces or after punctuation. A line break may not be inserted within a Miao syllable, or before punctuation immediately following a Miao syllable. There is no line breaking hyphenation. Word breaking occurs only before an initial consonant (N)C. Polysyllablic words are common.
- **5. Rendering:** the "wart". A number of characters in the code charts are drawn with a half-ring fused into the glyph. This "wart" represents a pronunciation which may be voicing or half voicing or lenition or some other sort of "reduced tension". The wart is often drawn on the left side of a character, but if the base grapheme is hollow on the right side, the "wart" sometimes is applied to the right to reduce space used in printing. In the Chuxiong style of writing, the wart is not written, but instead a dot is drawn immediately after the character. Some Yi users do the same thing with a vertical stroke mark resembling a serif on the letters. A given word in a particular dialect can be written with a wart, a dot, or (rather more rarely and with little standardization) the serif-like mark, or without being considered a spelling change. Some documents have been published in both "wart" and "dot-like" forms for different user communities. In any case, because the users claim that these are simply different ways to write the same characters, the warted characters have been encoded, with the proviso that their glyph shapes may vary in implementation. Here are the "warted" and "dotted" variants:

| ₫ | ٦. | 3 | Э. | Ą | ٧. | <u>र</u> | T· | ₹ | T [.] | € | C. |
|----------|----|---|----|---|------------|----------|----|---|----------------|---|----|
| C | G. | Ł | Ŀ | ф | فا | Δ | Δ. | ⋬ | ∆ . | 3 |]∙ |
| 3 | I. | ଢ | c. | 4 | * | 1 | 1. | 3 | ε. | € | C. |
| R | R· | 4 | + | 3 | 3. | A | ٧. | A | A. | ¥ | Y· |

6. Rendering: the rimes. In Chuxiong orthography, the letters representing vowels and final nasals rest on the baseline (indicating Tone 3), and an additional tone mark is used following the vowel sign(s) to indicate other tones. In Ahmao and other orthographies, a special formatting character ("S" for "shifter" as described above) is used, following the last of the vowel letters when it is to be rendered above the base letter, or to the top left of the base letter, or to the right of the base letter, or below the base letter. When more than one rime character precedes the shifter, all of the glyphs are shifted together to the appropriate position.

7. Collating order: the onsets. Wide variation between user groups occurs in the collating order, and so it has been decided to devise a default ordering, reflected in the code table, which is based on an ordering widely used in China and reflected in the order of the Bopomofo phonetic characters. Nasalization and aspiration is taken into account in ordering the initials; the ordering of *attested* consonants is as follows:

$$L < \{L < L' < L' < L' < \{L' < L' < \{L' <$$

7. Collating order: the rimes. Wide variation between user groups occurs in the collating order here as well, and again the order of the Bopomofo phonetic characters has been broadly followed; the exception is that the finals -an, en, ang, and -eng have been shifted forward, because this makes better sense in terms of the structure of Miao itself. The basic order is a o we exp i u y o x ai ei au ou n y. Since some vowels are fused as ligatures and some vowels are multipart, the fused characters are ordered as though they were separate, with the ligatures preceding or following their unfused counterparts (it does not matter which so long as it is done consistently). Many of the ligatures are no longer used and are encoded for historical purposes; ligation is not productive. Here are the base characters:

$$\begin{array}{cccc} - & A & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & \\ & & & \\ & & \\ & & & \\ & &$$

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    O
    σ ONG (as ο O + Δ A)
    W
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c E

 ϵ EN $(as \epsilon E + \epsilon N)$

 ϵ ENG (as ϵ E + ϵ NG)

ς OEY

n I

 \cap IA $(as \cap I + A)$

 $_{n_c}$ IAN $(as _n I + _A + _c N)$

 n_b IANG (as n I + A + 6 NG)

 $_{\circ}$ IO $(as _{\circ} I + _{\circ} O)$

= IE

 $_{m}$ II $(as _{n}I + _{n}I)$

 \sim IU (as \cap I + \cup U)

 $_{n_{o}}$ ING (as $_{n}$ I + $_{6}$ NG)

u U

 $UA \qquad (as \cup U + A)$

UL UAN $(as \cup U + A + C N)$

US UANG (as U + A + 6 NG)

 ω UU (as ω U + ω U)

u UEI (as u U + v EI)

ub UNG $(as \cup U + 6 NG)$

5 Y

P AE

ь AEE

¬ ER

n R-ER

г ERR

r R-ERR

ı AI

L EI

ıı AU

9 OU

c N

6 NG

P TONE RIGHT

9 TONE TOP RIGHT

TONE ABOVE

d TONE BELOW

TONE-2

3 TONE-3

m TONE-4

r TONE-5

s TONE-6

TONE-7

t TONE-8

~ R-TONE-1

m R-TONE-2

R-TONE-4

- e R-TONE-5
- R-TONE-6
- ω R-TONE-8
- **9. Character names.** The transcription of character names follows the usual UCS conventions for rendering IPA characters in ASCII.

10. Unicode Character Properties.

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16F00;MIAO LETTER PA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;

...
16F41;MIAO LETTER HHA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;
16F50;MIAO LETTER NASALIZATION;Lo;0;L;;;;;;;
16F51;MIAO LETTER ASPIRATION;MC;0;L;;;;;;;
16F52;MIAO LETTER REFORMED VOICING;MC;0;L;;;;;;;
16F53;MIAO LETTER REFORMED ASPIRATION;MC;0;L;;;;;;;
16F54;MIAO LETTER A;MC;0;L;;;;N;;;;

...
16F7C;MIAO LETTER NG;MC;0;L;;;;N;;;;
16F7D;MIAO MODIFIER TONE RIGHT;MN;0;L;;;;N;;;;
16F7E;MIAO MODIFIER TONE TOP RIGHT;MN;0;L;;;;N;;;;
16F7F;MIAO MODIFIER TONE ABOVE;MN;0;L;;;;N;;;;
16F80;MIAO MODIFIER TONE BELOW;MN;0;L;;;;N;;;;
16F81;MIAO LETTER TONE—2;Lm;0;L;;;;N;;;;
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Anonymous. s.d. "White [sic] Yi songbook", Yunnan Sheng Jidujiao Xiehui 云南省基督教协会 "Yunnan Province Christian Association".

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| | 16F02 | 16F12 | 16F22 | 16F32 | | 16F52 | 16F62 | 16F72 | 16F82 |
| 3 | ٥ | C | و | R | | ୍ର, | ം | | M |
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| Cons | 20 | nant onsets | 16F2F | Γ | MIAO LETTER REFORMED TSHA |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---|---|--|
| 16F00 | | MIAO LETTER PA | | | archaic character used in a 1949 S reformed |
| 1000 | _ | | | | orthography |
| 10001 | , | • used for ba in Dry Yi | 16F30 | J | MIAO LETTER SHA |
| 16F01 16F02 | | MIAO LETTER BA MIAO LETTER YI PA | 16F31 | 7 | MIAO LETTER SSA |
| 10002 | _ | | 16F32 | R | MIAO LETTER ZHA |
| 16502 | | • used for pa in Dry Yi | | | • used in Black Yi |
| 16F03 | οΙ | MIAO LETTER PLA | 16F33 | ₽R | MIAO LETTER ZSHA |
| 10004 | _ | • used in Sichuan Hmong | | | • used in Black Yi |
| 16F04 16F05 | 2 | | 16F34 | + | MIAO LETTER TSA |
| | | MIAO LETTER MHA MIAO LETTER ARCHAIC MA | | | used for dza in Dry Yi |
| 1000 | 11 | | 16F35 | 4 | MIAO LETTER DZA |
| 40007 | _ | • used in Pollard's early orthography | 16F36 | t | MIAO LETTER YI TSA |
| 16F07 | Γ V | | | | • used for tsa in Dry Yi |
| 16F08 16F09 | ٩ | | 16F37 | | MIAO LETTER SA |
| 10009 | 4 | | 16F38 | 3 | MIAO LETTER ZA |
| 16F0A | т | • used in Black Yi MIAO LETTER TA | 16F39 | 3 | MIAO LETTER ZSA |
| IOFUA | 1 | | | | • used in Black Yi |
| 16F0B | Ŧ | • used for da in Dry Yi | 16F3A | ٨ | MIAO LETTER ZZA |
| | ₹ + | MIAO LETTER DA MIAO LETTER YI TA | 16F3B | А | MIAO LETTER ZZSA |
| IOFUC | 1 | | | | • used in Black Yi |
| 1000 | _ | • used for ta in Dry Yi | 16F3C | > | MIAO LETTER ARCHAIC ZZA |
| | | MIAO LETTER TTA | | | • used in Pollard's early orthography |
| 10FUE | ٦ | MIAO LETTER DDA MIAO LETTER NA | 16F3D | Α | MIAO LETTER ZZYA |
| 16F10 | | | | | • used in Black Yi |
| 16F10 | | MIAO LETTER ARCHAIGNA | 16F3E | A | MIAO LETTER ZZSYA |
| 101 11 | U | MIAO LETTER ARCHAIC NA | | | • used in Black Yi |
| 16510 | o | • used in Pollard's early orthography | 16F3F | U | MIAO LETTER WA |
| | | MIAO LETTER NNA MIAO LETTER NNHA | 16F40 | Υ | MIAO LETTER AH |
| | | MIAO LETTER NNHA MIAO LETTER LA | | | • glottal stop |
| | | MIAO LETTER LA MIAO LETTER LYA | 16F41 | ¥ | MIAO LETTER HHA |
| 101 13 | L | | | | • used in Black Yi |
| 16F16 | 1. | • used in Black Yi MIAO LETTER LHA | | | |
| | ю | MIAO LETTEK LITA | | | |
| 16E17 | | | Mod | ITIE | ers |
| 16F17 | | MIAO LETTER LHYA | 16F50 | | |
| | مه | MIAO LETTER LHYA • used in Black Yi | | | PTS MIAO LETTER NASALIZATION MIAO LETTER ASPIRATION |
| 16F18 | ۵ | MIAO LETTER LHYA • used in Black Yi MIAO LETTER TLHA | 16F50 | (ં | MIAO LETTER NASALIZATION MIAO LETTER ASPIRATION |
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| 16F18 16F19 16F1A 16F1B 16F1C 16F1D 16F1D | | MIAO LETTER LHYA • used in Black Yi MIAO LETTER TLHA MIAO LETTER DLHA MIAO LETTER TLHYA MIAO LETTER TLHYA MIAO LETTER DLHYA MIAO LETTER KA • used for ga in Dry Yi MIAO LETTER GA MIAO LETTER YI KA • used for ka in Dry Yi | 16F50 16F51 16F52 16F53 | (。' 。' 。, | MIAO LETTER NASALIZATION MIAO LETTER ASPIRATION MIAO LETTER REFORMED VOICING • archaic character used in a post-1949 reformed orthography MIAO LETTER REFORMED ASPIRATION • archaic character used in a post-1949 reformed orthography |
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         • used in Eastern Lisu
16F75 of MIAO LETTER ER
16F76 or MIAO LETTER ROUNDED ER
         • used in Eastern Lisu
16F77 o MIAO LETTER AI
16F79 OII MIAO LETTER AU
16F7A ∘ MIAO LETTER OU
16F7B ം MIAO LETTER N
16F7C 6 MIAO LETTER NG
```

Positioning tone marks

These are used to position the vowel off of the baseline position to indicate a changed tone.

16F7D MIAO LETTER TONE RIGHT
16F7E MIAO LETTER TONE TOP RIGHT
16F7F MIAO LETTER TONE ABOVE
16F80 MIAO LETTER TONE BELOW

Baseline tone marks

These are used in Chuxiong Ahmao instead of the four above

16F81 r MIAO LETTER TONE-2 16F82 s MIAO LETTER TONE-3 16F83 m MIAO LETTER TONE-4 16F84 r MIAO LETTER TONE-5 16F85 s MIAO LETTER TONE-6 16F86 L MIAO LETTER TONE-7 16F87 s MIAO LETTER TONE-8

Archaic baseline tone marks

These are archaic characters used in a post-1949 reformed orthography

16F88 ~ MIAO LETTER REFORMED TONE-1
16F89 m MIAO LETTER REFORMED TONE-2
16F8A > MIAO LETTER REFORMED TONE-4
16F8B • MIAO LETTER REFORMED TONE-5
16F8C α MIAO LETTER REFORMED TONE-6
16F8D ω MIAO LETTER REFORMED TONE-8

Figures.

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规范苗文声母符号
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Figure 1. Chart of complete Chuxiong style Lao Miaowen system. (Wang Yangcai, 2005).

Figure 2. Musical notation with Lao Miaowen replacing the numbers in a Yi hymnal.

Figure 3. Ahmao Tower of Babel passage excerpt from unknown source showing the "wart" (Wang Shi Wei, 2005).

Figure 4. "John in Laka" from Cambridge University Library showing the fifth tone category (vowel-below).

Figure 5. "Hymnbook is Lakkia" [sic, likely Laka] from Cambridge University Library showing the fifth tone category (vowel-below).

A. Administrative

1. Title

Final proposal for encoding the Miao script in the SMP of the UCS

2. Requester's name

China, Ireland, and UK

3. Requester type (Member body/Liaison/Individual contribution)

National Body contribution.

4. Submission date

2010-03-26

- 5. Requester's reference (if applicable)
- 6. Choose one of the following:
- 6a. This is a complete proposal

Yes.

6b. More information will be provided later

No.

B. Technical - General

1. Choose one of the following:

1a. This proposal is for a new script (set of characters)

Yes

1b. Proposed name of script

Miao.

1c. The proposal is for addition of character(s) to an existing block

No.

1d. Name of the existing block

2. Number of characters in proposal

128

3. Proposed category (A-Contemporary; B.1-Specialized (small collection); B.2-Specialized (large collection); C-Major extinct; D-Attested extinct; E-Minor extinct; F-Archaic Hieroglyphic or Ideographic; G-Obscure or questionable usage symbols)

Category A.

4a. Is a repertoire including character names provided?

Ves.

4b. If YES, are the names in accordance with the "character naming guidelines" in Annex L of P&P document?

Yes.

4c. Are the character shapes attached in a legible form suitable for review?

Yes.

5a. Who will provide the appropriate computerized font (ordered preference: True Type, or PostScript format) for publishing the standard? **David Morse and Michael Everson.**

5b. If available now, identify source(s) for the font (include address, e-mail, ftp-site, etc.) and indicate the tools used:

Michael Everson, Fontographer.

6a. Are references (to other character sets, dictionaries, descriptive texts etc.) provided?

Yes.

6b. Are published examples of use (such as samples from newspapers, magazines, or other sources) of proposed characters attached?

7. Does the proposal address other aspects of character data processing (if applicable) such as input, presentation, sorting, searching, indexing, transliteration etc. (if yes please enclose information)?

Yes.

8. Submitters are invited to provide any additional information about Properties of the proposed Character(s) or Script that will assist in correct understanding of and correct linguistic processing of the proposed character(s) or script. Examples of such properties are: Casing information, Numeric information, Currency information, Display behaviour information such as line breaks, widths etc., Combining behaviour, Spacing behaviour, Directional behaviour, Default Collation behaviour, relevance in Mark Up contexts, Compatibility equivalence and other Unicode normalization related information. See the Unicode standard at http://www.unicode.org for such information on other scripts. Also see Unicode Character Database http://www.unicode.org/Public/UNIDATA/ UnicodeCharacterDatabase.html and associated Unicode Technical Reports for information needed for consideration by the Unicode Technical Committee for inclusion in the Unicode Standard.

See above.

C. Technical – Justification

1. Has this proposal for addition of character(s) been submitted before? If YES, explain.

Yes, in N3669 and N3761.

2a. Has contact been made to members of the user community (for example: National Body, user groups of the script or characters, other experts, etc.)?

Yes.

2b. If YES, with whom?

Yunnan Minority Language Commission, David Morse, Joakim Enwall.

2c. If YES, available relevant documents

3. Information on the user community for the proposed characters (for example: size, demographics, information technology use, or publishing use) is included?

Yes.

4a. The context of use for the proposed characters (type of use; common or rare)

Common.

4b. Reference

Scriptures, dictionaries, song books, textbooks, signs

5a. Are the proposed characters in current use by the user community?

Yes.

5b. If YES, where?

In Northeastern Yunnan, China.

6a. After giving due considerations to the principles in the P&P document must the proposed characters be entirely in the BMP?

No.

6b. If YES, is a rationale provided?

6c. If YES, reference

7. Should the proposed characters be kept together in a contiguous range (rather than being scattered)?

Yes.

8a. Can any of the proposed characters be considered a presentation form of an existing character or character sequence?

MI

8b. If YES, is a rationale for its inclusion provided?

8c. If YES, reference

9a. Can any of the proposed characters be encoded using a composed character sequence of either existing characters or other proposed characters?

No.

9b. If YES, is a rationale for its inclusion provided?

9c. If YES, reference

10a. Can any of the proposed character(s) be considered to be similar (in appearance or function) to an existing character?

Yes.

10b. If YES, is a rationale for its inclusion provided?

Yes.

10c. If YES, reference

Some letters appear similar to Cree or Latin, but this is a different script with different behaviours. They should be encoded as a block

11a. Does the proposal include use of combining characters and/or use of composite sequences (see clauses 4.12 and 4.14 in ISO/IEC 10646-1: 2000)?

Yes.

11b. If YES, is a rationale for such use provided?

Yes.

11c. If YES, reference

See above.

11d. Is a list of composite sequences and their corresponding glyph images (graphic symbols) provided?

No.

11e. If YES, reference

12a. Does the proposal contain characters with any special properties such as control function or similar semantics?

No.

12b. If YES, describe in detail (include attachment if necessary)

13a. Does the proposal contain any Ideographic compatibility character(s)?

No.

13b. If YES, is the equivalent corresponding unified ideographic character(s) identified?