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Comments on ISO/DIS 7098 Information and documentation à©â€ž® Romanization of Chinese

Council on East Asian Libraries

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Comments on ISO/DIS 7098 Information and documentation – Romanization of Chinese
CEAL CTP-CCM Joint Working Group on ISO 7098 Romanization of Chinese
In consultation with CEAL members

Submitted Feb. 2, 2015

I. General comments:

The CEAL CTP/CCM Working Group on ISO 7098 Romanization of Chinese submitted CEAL comments with suggested changes on the ISO/CD 7098 draft (see also Appendix II, CEAL response in Oct. 2013) focusing on section 11, Transcription rules for personal names and geographic names, in October 2013. Most comments were accepted and changes are reflected in the new revised draft ISO/DIS 7098, section 12, Transcription rules for named entities.

From December 9, 2014 to January 8, 2015, the CEAL CTP/CCM Working Group conducted a survey among CEAL members. The survey requested input on the ISO/DIS 7098 new revised draft sections, especially on Rules 11 and 12.14-17, in comparison to the ALA-LC Romanization table on Chinese. The survey included 13 questions that were grouped into four categories by importance. A total of 31 members participated in the survey. The majority voted to “support” or “support with modified suggestions” ISO/DIS 7098 instructions in Sections 11-12. Some voted not to support or voiced concerns. Most of the suggestions and concerns, whether members voted to support or not to support, include reasons. We have summarized members’ concerns in the table below. The entire survey results are available in Appendix I, 2014 Survey Results.

We ask ISO seriously considers CEAL’s input and revises some instructions of this standard to make it more practical, clearer, and easier to adopt globally so as to facilitate information dissemination and user discovery internationally.

We also suggest the ISO website maintains lists of those “proper noun” names for non-Chinese places, languages, tribes, and religions and their variants and abbreviations which will be affected by new rules, if adopted. Users should be able to locate more inclusive lists in order to follow the standards correctly, and to avoid ambiguity and be consistent in practice. Besides the implications of Romanization rules, we sincerely hope that ISO considers rule change consequences that will affect scholarly communication, global information retrieval and discovery, data integrity, and the costs associated with consolidation and conversion of existing data.

CEAL would like to thank NISO/ALA for providing CEAL members the opportunity to review and provide input on the important development of ISO 7098 Romanization of Chinese.
II. Comments on ISO/DIS 7098 section 10-12 (The full text of these sections are included):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rules #</th>
<th>ISO/DIS New revised instruction based on comments from CEAL and other constituencies. (see Appendix II, CEAL response in Oct. 2013)</th>
<th>CEAL Proposed Revision underlined and Reasons based on the survey results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(ISO/DIS 7098) 10 Numerals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ISO/DIS 7098) 11 Chinese Pinyin Orthography (New addition from last draft)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td><strong>11.1</strong> Most of commonly used Chinese words are polysyllabic words. In international documentation and information, it is reasonable to link different Pinyin monosyllables to form a polysyllabic Chinese word.</td>
<td><strong>Comments/Concerns:</strong> 32% voted to not support and 16% voted to support with suggested changes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>11.2</strong> Before the Middle Age, the Greeks and Romans always knew what a word was, and they were able to identify words even if the texts were written without spaces between neighboring words at that time. Afterwards the spaces between words were invented in Europe. The use of spaces implies the concept of word, it has become the standard for all modes of writing alphabetical languages to insert spaces between words, and the publishers and librarians in the world apply this common standard.</td>
<td>1. Some CEAL members believe 11.7, regarding “Chinese proper nouns”, is difficult for international users to follow. Personal names and geographical names are exceptions. Names of ethnicities/tribes, languages, and religions may have variations and abbreviations. Such variations may create ambiguities when this standard is applied.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>11.3</strong> In Chinese Pinyin, it is also necessary to use the spaces to separate words, not syllables. The word segmentation is a very good tradition of world civilization. In the Romanization of Chinese, it is beneficial to respect this good tradition.</td>
<td>2. Rule 11.7 may potentially impact user discovery experiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>11.4</strong> In Chinese Pinyin, monosyllable is ambiguous. One syllable can represent several Chinese characters. Therefore Pinyin syllable is ambiguous in representation of Chinese characters. In Chinese Pinyin, the ambiguity index of monosyllables is big. In average, one Chinese syllable has to represent more than 20 Chinese characters for general use. However, if we link different Chinese monosyllables to form the polysyllabic Chinese word, the ambiguity index of Pinyin syllable will be reduced. In order to</td>
<td>3. ISO 7098 should maintain consistency in systematic Romanization, avoid ambiguity, and minimize the usage of “polysyllabic Chinese words”. This is because Romanization is mostly used by non-Chinese native speakers, scholarly communication, and machine processing of data containing Chinese language. Polysyllabic Chinese-named entities in Romanization may not be as easy to understand by the “standards or regulation” of non-Chinese.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
disambiguate Pinyin syllables, it is necessary to link different monosyllables to form a polysyllabic Chinese word. 

**11.5** The further description of the ambiguity index for Chinese syllables is given in annex C.

**11.6 Basic Rules for Chinese Pinyin Orthography** (GB/T 16159-2012, Chinese Standard, 2012) contains rules for separating or joining syllables to form word: rules for spelling common words (nouns, verbs, adjectives, pronouns, etc), rules for spelling fused phrase expressions, rules for spelling personal names and place names; rules for representing tones; rules for hyphenation at the end of line, etc.

**11.7** At present, in Chinese linguistics, there is no clear common definition of a Chinese word yet, so it is difficult to decide the boundary (dividing line) of a common Chinese word sometime, and, of course, it poses difficulty to link the monosyllables to form a common polysyllabic Chinese word. However, the boundary of a Chinese proper noun is relatively clear. It is not so difficult to link different monosyllables to form a Chinese polysyllabic proper noun (the named entity as personal name, geographic name, language name, ethnic name, tribal name, religion name, etc), because the boundary of a Chinese polysyllabic named entity is easy to decide according to the standards or regulations of Chinese. In international documentation and information, it is necessary and possible to link different Pinyin monosyllables to form a Chinese polysyllabic named entity in order to avoid ambiguity.

(ISO/DIS 7098) **12 Transcription rules for named entities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>12.1</strong></th>
<th><strong>CEAL suggestion for writing double surnames without hyphen was not accepted:</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **12.1** Chinese personal names are to be written separately with the surname first, followed by the given name written as one word, with the initial letters of both capitalized. The traditional compound surnames are to be written together without a hyphen. The double surnames without philological permanence | **CEAL Proposed Revision (From Oct 2013):**

**12.1** Chinese personal names are to be written separately with the surname first, followed by the given name written as one word, with the initial letters of both capitalized. The traditional compound surnames are to be written together without a hyphen.
compound surnames are to be written together without a hyphen. The two-character or multi-character double surnames are to be written together with a hyphen and the initial letters of both capitalized. Pen names and other aliases are to be treated in the same manner.

EXAMPLE 4 Zhang-Wang Shufang (张王淑芳)
EXAMPLE 5 Xiang-Situ Wenliang (项司徒文良)

Comments/Concerns:
1. Some CEAL members expressed their concerns and do not support the use of hyphen between double names.
2. Also, some Taiwanese double surname not by marriage need to be looked into as well:
   - 范姜, 源於台灣桃園縣新屋鄉
   - 吕蕭, 源於台灣台北縣淡水鎮
   - 張簡, 源於福建南靖县
   - 張廖, 源於台灣台中縣
   - 徐雋, 源於台灣台中市
   - 王曹, 源於福建

Reasons:
1. Double surnames should not be hyphenated. When a wife adopts her husband’s surname, she still keeps her own surname. For example, 宋美龄 and 蒋宋美龄 have both been used to refer to the same person. If hyphenated, it becomes a new surname and is no longer a true double surname.
2. Adding a hyphen would impact indexing and searching in some library systems, thus impeding the user discovery experience.

CEAL suggestion was accepted and the example 3 on 老张头儿 was removed:

12.2 A surname, given name, or seniority order after the adjuncts “Xiao”, “Lao”, “Da”, “A” is to be written separately and with the initial letters both capitalized.

EXAMPLE 1 Xiao Liu (小刘, younger Liu)
EXAMPLE 2 Lao Qian (老钱, older Qian)
EXAMPLE 3 Da Li (大李, older Li)
EXAMPLE 4 A Niu (阿牛, A Niu)

Comments/Concerns:
1. Example 4 resembles a nickname which can cause potential confusion if listed under this rule.
2. “Xiao”, “Lao”, and “Da” are not real surnames and should not be capitalized unless they appear at the beginning of a sentence.
3. If the seniority order words are capitalized, they can cause confusion with real proper names such as Xiao 肖, Lao 劳, etc.
4. 小, 大, or 阿 may also be the first character of a given name, in which case, it should be joined together with the subsequent character and with the initial capitalized.

**CEAL Proposed Revision:**

12.2 A surname, given name, or seniority order word after the adjuncts “xiao”, “lao”, or “da” is to be written separately and with the initial letter of the last name capitalized. Adjuncts such as “xiao”, “lao”, and “da” should not be capitalized unless they appear at the beginning of a sentence. If the character is part of a given name, follow the same practice for given names.

**EXAMPLE 1** xiao Liu (小刘, younger Liu)
**EXAMPLE 2** lao Qian (老钱, older Qian)
**EXAMPLE 3** da Li (大李, older Li)
**EXAMPLE 4** A Niu (阿牛, A Niu) [to be deleted]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>12.5</th>
<th>If a geographical proper name or geographical feature name has a monosyllabic adjunct, they should be written together as one word.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>EXAMPLE 1</strong> Jingshan Houjie (景山后街, Jingshan Back Street where monosyllabic adjunct hou is written together with geographical feature name jie)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>EXAMPLE 2</strong> Chaoyangmennei Nanxiaojie (朝阳门内南小街, South Street inside Chaoyangmen Gate where monosyllabic adjunct nei is written together with geographical proper name Chaoyangmen)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>EXAMPLE 3</strong> Dongsi Shitiao (东四十条, Dongsi tenth Street where monosyllabic adjunct si is written together with geographical feature name Dong)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Comments/Concerns:**

Some CEAL members found this instruction confusing and difficult to apply. Therefore, this could create inconsistencies in practice.

12.6 CEAL suggestion was accepted

12.6 If a Chinese place name does not contain syllable(s) of geographical feature or jurisdiction, write it together as one word.

**Comments/Concerns:**

CEAL members questioned Example 2 because it is a scenic spot and not a place name.
### 12.8 CEAL suggestion was accepted

**EXAMPLE 1** Zhoukoudian (周口店, an historical site)

**EXAMPLE 2** Santanyinyue (三潭印月, a scenic spot)

**Comments/Concerns:**

The name in Example 5 should be separated by the first and last names along with the rest of the examples. We suspect this was a typo since it was separated in GB/T 16159-2012 汉语拼音正词法基本规则, 6.2.3 and in the ISO/CD 7098 draft. For clarification, CEAL would like to propose changing the instruction by adding at the end of the first sentence "as instructed in 12.1 and 12.3. The multi-character surname and given name are to be grouped separately." We also suggest correcting Example 5 and adding another example of a full Western name as Example 6, and then renumbering the rest of examples.

**CEAL Proposed Revision**

12.8. Chinese transcriptions of non-Chinese personal names and place names are to be spelled according to their Chinese pronunciation as instructed in 12.1 and 12.3. Multi-character surnames and given names are to be grouped separately. For reference, the original name or commonly known Roman (Latin) spelling, if known, may be noted in parentheses after the Chinese transcription.

**EXAMPLE 5** Jiechuan Longzhijie or Jiechuan Longzhijie (Akutagawa Ryunosuke) for 芥川龙之介

**EXAMPLE 6** Lichade Nikesong or Lichade Nikesong (Richard Nixon) for 理查德•尼克松

### 12.9 CEAL suggestion was rejected:

**12.9** Transcribed names which have already become Chinese words are to be spelled according to their Chinese pronunciation.

**Comments/Concerns:**

The survey results show that 19% voted to not support this instruction and 42% voted to support with suggested changes.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXAMPLE 1</th>
<th>Feizhou (非洲, Africa)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EXAMPLE 2</td>
<td>Nanmei (南美, South America)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXAMPLE 3</td>
<td>Deguo (德国, Deutschland)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXAMPLE 4</td>
<td>Dongnanya (东南亚, Southeast Asia)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ISO rejected reason:**

Non-accepted. It will be better to keep consistence with Chinese National Standard GB/T 16159-2011 Basic Rules for Hanyu Pinyin Orthography, Beijing: Standards Press of China, 2011.

**Comments/Concerns:**

CEAL didn't find the cited source, but found:
  4.2.5 2nd paragraph: Transliterated names which have already become Chinese words are to be spelled according to their Chinese pronunciation. (Same examples were given as above)
- GB/T 16159-2012 汉语拼音正词法基本规则: 6.2.3. 非汉语人名、地名的汉字名称用汉语拼音拼写。Examples listed under this instruction are included in ISO 7098 12.8).

1. “Names which have already become Chinese words” are difficult to comprehend by non-native Chinese language speakers and Pinyin users.
2. From these examples, does this rule refer to the non-direct transliteration of “non-Chinese place names”?
3. It would be difficult for people outside China to determine which names (and/or forms of names) have already become Chinese words. It would be helpful to define such cases for consistent practice, such as names of countries, regions, continents, etc.

**CEAL Proposed Revision:**

Option 1. Align with the instruction in 12.3
Option 2. Proposed revision:
12.9 Transcribe non-Chinese place, nation and region names as one word.

[In addition, provide and maintain an online list of place names (and whether to include all variant forms, i.e. 德国, 德意志联邦, 德意志联邦共和国 for Germany; 日本, 日本国, 大日本帝国, 大日本国 for Japan), that have become Chinese words but are exceptions to the instruction 12.3.]

12.10 **In some cases, all the letters in personal names and geographical names may be capitalized.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXAMPLE 1</th>
<th>BEIJING (北京, Beijing)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EXAMPLE 2</td>
<td>LI HUA (李华, Li Hua)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXAMPLE 3</td>
<td>DONGFANG SHUO (东方朔, Dongfang Shuo)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Comments/Concerns:**

This instruction is unrelated to Chinese Romanization, and considered to be transcribing what some people believe is the norm.

12.11 **In the abbreviation of personal names, surnames are to be written with initial capitalized letter or with all capitalized letters; given names are to be written with the first letter capitalized in every syllable and are to be added a dot after the capitalized letter.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXAMPLE 1</th>
<th>BEIJING (北京, Beijing)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EXAMPLE 2</td>
<td>LI HUA (李华, Li Hua)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXAMPLE 3</td>
<td>DONGFANG SHUO (东方朔, Dongfang Shuo)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Comments/Concerns:**

This instruction is unrelated to Chinese Romanization, and considered to be transcribing what some people believe is the norm.
**EXAMPLE 1** Li H. or LI H. for Li Hua (李华)
**EXAMPLE 2** Wang J.G. or WANG J.G. for Wang Jianguo (王建国)
**EXAMPLE 3** Dongfang S. or DONGFANG S. for Dongfang Shuo (东方朔)
**EXAMPLE 4** Zhuge K.M. or ZHUGE K.M. for Zhuge Kongming (诸葛孔明)

### 12.12

**The abbreviation of geographical names written together as one word, is to be written with the first letter capitalized in every syllable; all capitalized letters in the syllable are to be linked together.**

**EXAMPLE 1** BJ for Beijing (北京)
**EXAMPLE 2** HZ for Hangzhou (杭州)

**Comments/Concerns:**
This instruction is unrelated to Chinese Romanization, and considered to be transcribing what some people believe is the norm.

### 12.14

**New addition**

**12.14** Language names are written as one word with the initial letter capitalized.

**EXAMPLE 1** Hanyu 汉语 (Chinese)
**EXAMPLE 2** Yingyu 英语 (English)
**EXAMPLE 3** Deyu 德语 (German)
**EXAMPLE 4** Fayu 法语 (French)
**EXAMPLE 5** Xibanyayu 西班牙语 (Spanish)

**CEAL Proposed Revision:**

**Comments/Concerns:**
45% of CEAL members voted against this instruction, and 19% voted their support but with suggested changes.

1. This does not cover other variant forms that refer to a language: Spanish can be 西班牙语, 西班牙文, 西语, 西文--the last two examples would be hard to determine if used out of context, because they could refer to Western languages.

2. Consider language (語) variants such as wen (文) and hua (話) to be included as well. Examples: Yingwen 英文 (English), Hanwen 韓文 (Korean), Kejiahua 客家話 (Hakka), etc.

**CEAL Proposed Revision:**

**Option 1:** Remove this instruction.

**Option 2:** Proposed Revision:

**12.14** Language names are written as one word with the initial letter capitalized if the name includes country, tribe, race, or ethnicity names before the language.
### 12.15 New addition

**12.15** Ethnic names and tribal names are written as one word with the initial letter capitalized.

**EXAMPLE 1** Hanzu 汉族 (Chinese ethnic group)
**EXAMPLE 2** Maolizu 毛利族 (Maori tribe)
**EXAMPLE 3** Maonanzu 毛难族 (Maonan ethnic group)
**EXAMPLE 4** Weiwu’erzu 维吾尔族 (Uyghur ethnic group)

#### Comments/Concerns:

1. Some CEAL members like ISO proposed instructions for easy following and consistent practice, while others did not support this instruction and wanted to continue to separate zu from the ethnic names.
2. The members who do not support this also have concerns on the difficulty in converting legacy data.
3. For example 4, there is no ambiguity in “Weiwu’er” before “er”, the apostrophe should be removed.

#### CEAL Proposed Revision:

**EXAMPLE 4** Weiwu’erzu 维吾尔族 (Uyghur ethnic group) [remove the apostrophe before “er”]

[In addition, provide and maintain an online list of ethnic names (and whether to include all variant forms) to make it easy to apply]

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### 12.16 New addition

**12.16** Religion names are written as one word with the initial letter capitalized.

**EXAMPLE 1** Fojiao 佛教 (Buddhism)
**EXAMPLE 2** Jidujiao 基督教 (Christianity)
**EXAMPLE 3** Tianzhujiao 天主教 (Catholicism)
**EXAMPLE 4** Yisilanjiao 伊斯兰教 (Islamism)

#### Comments/Concerns:

1. Does this also apply to followers of a religion? 基督教 (Jidujiao) and 基督徒 (Jidu tu) should be Romanized in the same manner.
2. How should religious terms such as cult and folk religions or historical religion names be treated? (邪教, 拜火教, 祆教, Confucianism 儒教, Daoism 道教, 白莲教)?

#### CEAL Proposed Revision:

[In addition, provide and maintain an online list of ethnic names (and whether to include all variant forms) to make it easy to apply]
Religion names and their followers are written as one word with the initial letter capitalized.

**EXAMPLE 5** Huijiaotu 回教徒 (Muslim)

**EXAMPLE 6** Jidutu 基督徒 (Christian)

In addition, provide and maintain an online list of religion names (and whether to include all variant forms) to make it easy to apply.


**Charges:**
- Review the draft revision of ISO 7098 in comparison with the ALA-LC Romanization Table for Chinese.
- Gather additional input from interested CEAL members.
- Prepare the final set of suggestions and obtain approval from the CEAL Executive Board.
- Send official CEAL response to NISO via ALA.

**Members:**
- Shi Deng, Chair (UC San Diego)
- Vickie Doll (U. Kansas)
- Sarah Elman (Columbia)
- T.J. Kao (Yale)
- Dongyun Ni (U. Hawai‘i)
- Jia Xu (U. Iowa)