

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES FOR PROPOSED NEW OR REVISED ROMANIZATION TABLES

These guidelines apply to the creation of new tables and the revision of existing tables.

Principle/Goals:

- The ALA/LC Romanization Tables should be transliteration schemes rather than replicating pronunciation. Pronunciation is variable around the world. Another goal of this principle is to enable machine-transliteration whenever possible and preferably reversible transliteration.
- The ALA/LC Romanization Tables should be in line with internationally accepted standards and/or standards officially sanctioned by the home country when possible.

Guidelines:

1. Examine any existing national and international standards before beginning the process of creating a new or revising an existing romanization table.
2. *Mapping characters to the Latin script*
 - a. Take the equivalent characters used from the MARC Basic Latin script repertoire as much as possible.
 - b. Choose a Latin script equivalent for a non-Latin letter, not necessarily based on pronunciation of the letter, but so as to maximize clarity and minimize confusion with the transliteration of other letters. The resulting Latin script equivalents should allow for the reversal of romanization as systematically as possible, without the application of special algorithms or contextual tests.
 - c. Avoid special Latin script alphabetic characters as they are not always widely supported in display and printing.
3. *Modifiers*
 - a. Prefer single letter equivalents (e.g., š) to blends (e.g., sh), that is, multiple letter equivalents, unless there is no ambiguity in the use of the blend.
 - b. Use modifier characters (diacritical marks) in conjunction with the basic Latin script characters, but take care to avoid modifier characters that are not widely supported (e.g., ligature marks), or whose positioning over or under a Latin script base letter may interfere with the printing and/or display of that letter.
 - c. *Above.* It is recommended that the acute (´), grave (`) and dieresis (¨) be preferred to other modifying characters over base letters. Use the tilde (~), macron (¯), circumflex (^), and dot above (˙) characters if needed.
 - d. *Below.* Avoid modifiers below characters, since they often interfere with portions of Latin letters that descend and when underlining is present. If a modifier below is desired, prefer the dot below (·) or the cedilla (¸).
4. Marks used as guides to pronunciation should not be rendered as Latin alphabet characters, but rather as diacritics or punctuation marks to facilitate reversibility.
5. *Non-alphabetic languages*

DRAFT

- a. In dealing with non-alphabetic scripts, e.g., syllabic scripts, the above guidelines should be applied to the extent that they can.
 - b. Any provisions for aggregation should be based on such factors as international agreement, convenience of use, promotion of consistent application, and ease of computer access.
6. *Other factors.* The impact of file maintenance on legacy records should be considered in revising tables in relation to the ease or difficulty of accomplishing it, the benefits provided by the revisions, and the obligations of and impact on various organizations and institutions.

Process:

1. *Forwarding proposed new or revised Romanization tables.* Submit all draft tables (new and revised) to the Policy and Standards Division, Library of Congress, preferably as an attachment to an electronic mail message sent to policy@loc.gov. Submit all draft proposals as complete tables in an electronic format, e.g., Microsoft Word, so the resultant file may be updated during the review process. Submit revisions to existing tables as part of a complete table for the language. If only a part is being revised, clearly note the proposed revisions either 1) within the table itself or 2) as a separate document indicating what the proposed revisions are and the justification for them. Provide pertinent justification, e.g., experts consulted, sources consulted, for any proposed new or revised table.
2. *Library of Congress review.* The Policy and Standards Division and other Library staff with knowledge of the language or script will review draft tables (both new and revised).
3. *Other review.* After reaching consensus within the Library of Congress, the Library will seek comments from the community at large, including the appropriate committee within the American Library Association. This is done in several ways:
 - a. the draft will be posted on the Cataloging and Acquisitions Web site (<http://www.loc.gov/aba/>) with a request for comments usually within 90 days of the posting;
 - b. the draft table will be published in *Cataloging Service Bulletin* with a request for comments within 90 days;
 - c. the draft will be sent to identified stakeholders with the same 90 days request for comments; and
 - d. the availability of the draft will be noted in a posting to various electronic lists according to the language. See list below.
4. *Receipt of comments.* The requests for comments specify that such comments are to be sent to policy@loc.gov by a specified date. The Policy and Standards Division and other Library of Congress staff will evaluate the comments as they are received. Once the Library reaches consensus, the division will revise the draft table as appropriate. The Policy and Standards Division will acknowledge the receipt of comments.
5. *Approval process.* The Library of Congress will forward draft tables that have been completed to the chair of the appropriate committee within the American Library Association. Draft tables for languages of Africa and Asia go to the chair

DRAFT

of the Committee on Cataloging: African and Asian Materials (CC:AAM). Drafts for languages in other parts of the world go to the chair of the Committee on Cataloging: Description and Access (CC:DA). If the appropriate ALA committee has disagreements with the submitted draft table, it may be necessary to return to one of the steps above.

6. The Library of Congress will issue status reports to the stakeholders and electronic lists noted above.
7. *Approved tables.* Once the appropriate committee has approved the draft table, the Policy and Standards Division will make any changes to the table as the result of this process, post the approved table to the Cataloging and Acquisitions/ALA-LC Romanization Tables Web page (<http://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpsr/roman.html>), and publish the approved table in *Cataloging Service Bulletin*.

Electronic mail lists:

Autocat
PCC
CC:DA
CC:AAM
AJL
CEAL
CORMOSEA
African Studies Council