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Association for Library Collections and
Technical Services

Steering Committee on Non-English
Access

Final Report Draft

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Steering Committee for Non-English Access has completed its charge of implementing the recommendations of the Non-English Task Force. Some of the recommendations, such as recommendations 6 and 7, call for follow-up and continuous action on the part of ALCTS. Other recommendations, especially recommendations 2 and 5, were very complicated, as the Steering Committee decided to combine them to eliminate overlapping and duplication of effort. The Steering Committee created a new working group “to define requirements for the support of each script and language in library computer application.” The working group analyzed this recommendation and set the foundation for further exploration. The Working Group also recommended that ALCTS establish a committee of the principle players to continue the discussion and to act as a conduit between users and the producers of computer applications.

Recommendation 11 was vague and broad. The Committee recognized that this issue is outside the scope of the Subject Access Committee (SAC), since they are not charged with researching end users needs. The Steering Committee recommends that ALCTS needs to evaluate the original charge to assess the need for further research in this area. In searching the library literature, the Steering Committee found substantial amount of research that has already been done.

Recommendation 8 “to recruit library workers and specifically catalogers who are expert in one or more non-English languages” was outside our parameter since ALA is not in a position to recruit staff for libraries. The Steering Committee discussed this at the ALCTS Big Heads meeting at the ALA Annual 2008, but there were no conclusions or advice on how to pursue this recommendation. After further discussion on how to pursue this recommendation, the Steering Committee created a program to increase awareness of the needs to recruit Non-

English Specialists, which was successfully presented at ALA 2009. We encourage ALCTS to continue sponsoring programs devoted to this area.

In implementing recommendation 10 “to examine the use of romanized data in bibliographic and authority records” The Steering Committee wrote a charge and submitted it to MARBI as the appropriate group to handle this recommendation. After MARBI declined to accept the charge, the Steering Committee revised the charge and appointing a Working Group to implement this recommendation. The Working Group submitted their final report to the Steering Committee with several recommendations in December 2009.

In conclusion, the Steering Committee was able to overcome the many difficulties and was successful in implementing the 11 recommendations. The Steering Committee wishes to thank the ALCTS Executive Board for providing the opportunity to work on these important issues. The Committee would like to acknowledge the contribution and support of Beth Picknally Camden, the Liaison from the ALCTS Board and chair of the original Non-English Task Force. A special thanks to Glen Patton for hosting the Steering Committee conference calls.

Action Items:

The Steering Committee Recommend the following actions item to the ALCTS Executive Board

- § Create a Non-English Interest Group within ALCTS to continue the work of the Steering Committee.
- § Continue to sponsor pre-conferences and programs that are related to Non-English issues.
- § Continue monitoring the non-English discussion list and encourage audience to use it.
- § Promote research on the non-English subject access.
- § Special attention should be directed to each Working groups’ recommendations for implementing recommendations 2/5, 10, and 11.

INTRODUCTION

The Association for Library Collections and Technical Services (ALCTS) Executive Committee established the ALCTS Steering Committee to oversee the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the ALCTS Task Force on Non-English Access (www.ala.org/ala/alcts/newslinks/currentissues/nonenglishaccess/NON-EnglishReport07.pdf) on June 2007 with the following charges:

- Provide guidance and direction to the parties responsible for implementing the recommendations.
- Provide the Board with written progress reports on a quarterly basis.
- Complete its charge by December, 2009.

In preparation for implementing these recommendations, the chair of the Steering Committee and the ALCTS Board liaison met at ALA in 2007, and created a strategy to pursue the recommendations.

On August 27, 2007, the Steering Committee held its first conference meeting. Each recommendation was discussed thoroughly and each member of the Steering Committee was given their responsibilities ([see Appendix 1](#))

IMPLEMENTATIONS

Recommendation #1:

Charge:

Convert the TF's discussion list NONENGLISH@ala.org to an open list available to the library community to facilitate continued discussion of non-English language access issues

Implementation:

The NONENGLISH@ala.org list is now an open list and is used for discussion and posting of questions to the library community. Its membership rose from 55 members in 2007 to 235 members in 2009. In addition to publicizing the list to the library community ([see Appendix 2 ALCTS Non English List announcement](#)) the Steering Committee held a Forum ([see Appendix 3 report ALCTS Forum midwinter report, and the Forum PowerPoint Appendix 4 ALCTS Non-English Steering Committee Forum, 2009](#)). During this forum a need was expressed to compile a list of language and area studies groups as a contact list for libraries where such knowledge is not available. This list was compiled by Martin Heijdra ([see attached list Appendix 5](#))

Recommendation #2 and #5:

Charge:

Establish a working group whose task to define requirements for the support of each script and language in library computer application. These will facilitate library system development and evaluation, and will provide guidance to system implementations. It is recommended that the working group's charge include the following points:

- **Determine the scripts to be documented. Include Latin as one of the scripts (This is necessary because Unicode includes additional Latin script characters outside of ASCII and ANSEL)**
- **Create a checklist that supports all scripts and languages, and that can be the basis for requirements for specific scripts or languages**
- **Obtain the assistance of appropriate language experts and organizations (including those outside of the United States) when defining the requirements for a specific script.**

Analyze the need for rules for the sorting of bibliographic entries in the Unicode environment. This analysis should take into account current cataloging rules, in particular the rules for heading creation, and the capabilities of online library catalog. If it is determined that there is a need for such rules, the Unicode Collation Algorithm (<http://www.unicode.org/reports/tr10/>) should be considered during development

Implementation:

Since there was overlap between Recommendations 2 and 5, the Steering Committee decided to combine both recommendations and write a new charge (see [Appendix 6 new charge ALCTS non English Charge 2 and 5 combined](#))

The Steering Committee called for volunteers, using a variety of forums. Formed the Working Group which includes:

Charles Husbands, Chair (Retired Senior Systems Librarian, Harvard)
 William Kopycki (Univ. of Penn.)
 Martin Heijdra (Princeton Univ.)
 John Eilts (Stanford Univ.)
 Adnan Malik (Univ. of Calif.)
 Jane Jacobs (Queens Borough PL)
 Joe Zeeman (OCLC)
 Randall Barry (LC)

The Working Group submitted their first report (see [Appendix 7 LLSSWG survey report](#)) in June 2009. Charles Husbands resigned as the Chair but remained as a member. John Eilts assumed his responsibility as the new Chair and submitted the final report of the WG with recommendations (see [Appendix 8](#)):

- As can be ascertained from this report, there is still much work to be done. The nature of the composition of the working group was not sufficient for such a large task to be accomplished in the time allotted. It is recommended that ALCTS set up a committee of the principle players to continue the dialog and act as a conduit between users and the producers of products.

- This group should also coordinate input from the various language specialists groups with a stake in the outcome.
- Further input needs to be solicited from the appropriate linguistic experts as to the best input methodologies for the end users of each language to be supported.
- This needs to include the issue of pre-composed glyphs and composed glyphs.
- Sorting orders will have to be established for the individual languages so that the results of data queries will be logically presented in an order expected by a native user of the specific language.
- This ongoing work needs to be communicated to libraries and the major library software developers, commercial and otherwise.
- Extensive fonts need to be developed as a cohesive family of fonts for all supported Unicode scripts that will be freely available to all (under a general license, such as the Open Font License of SIL). The fonts would need to be designed to be compatible to display the text of mixed scripts in equal visual weight.

Recommendation # 3

Charge:

Charge CC:AAM and/or the Committee for cataloging Description and Access (CC:DA) to work with the Program for Cooperative Cataloging (PCC) to review and update the ore level supplement on “Guidelines for Multiple Character Sets” (see Appendix 9)
Parties charged with carrying out this recommendation are permitted to request assistance form organization with languages expertise, both within and ousted ALA

Implementation:

Completed:

The PCC Standing Committee on standards has already completed the revision of the document that the Non-English TF identified. They also formed a new TF to review other identified documentation that is related to the non-English language standards and falls outside the scope of the Steering Committee. There is no report from this group since they are working directly with the PCC and their

report will be submitted to the PCC and not to the Non-English Steering Committee. (See the PCC final report Appendix 10)

Recommendation # 4

Charge:

As Resource Description and Access (RDA) is developed, it is recommended that CC:DA and CC:AAM consider and comment on any impact that the new rules will have on cataloging non-English materials. This review should be referred to appropriate liaison and groups when appropriate language expertise is lacking

Implementation:

Completed

The Steering Committee thanks CC:DA and CC:AAM for their attention to non-English access issues in the development of RDA in fulfillment of Recommendation 4 of the Task Force on Non-English Access Final Report.

- The Steering Committee recommends that CC:DA and CC:AAM continue to be the focus within ALA for ongoing review of these issues in RDA as revisions and updates are considered.

-The Steering Committee also recommends that CC:DA and CC:AAM consult with other groups both within ALA and outside ALA when there are particular issues related to non-English access arise.

The Steering Committee notes the list of organization developed by the CC:DA Task Force on Internal and External Communications (<http://www.libraries.psu.edu/tas/jca/ccda/docs/tf-comm5.pdf>) and urges that this list be used to solicit input. This list should also be maintained and expanded as additional languages and scripts become more widely used in bibliographic data and library systems. The Steering Committee suggests that the ALCTS non-English listserv (nonenglishaccess@ala.org) be used to present issues that would benefit from broader input.

Recommendation # 6

Charge:

Assign the ALCTS Cataloging and Classification Section (CCS) to work with the Public Library Association (PLA) Cataloging needs for Public Libraries Committee to plan joint program. Pre-conferences and continuing education on the cataloging needs for libraries with multi-lingual user population

Implementation:

Completed:

CCS/CNPL created and presented their program “Serving the Whole Community: Multilingual Access in Public Libraries” at the ALA Annual meeting at Anaheim 2008.

(See <http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/alcts/confevents/past/ala/annual/08/08servecommunity.cfm>)

Development in this area continued to be of interest to the CC:AAM. Their midwinter minutes for the 2009, note "The Chair noted the need to brainstorm for a program for the 2010 ALA Annual Conference; it is essential that CC:AAM continue to do activities of mutual interest and benefit to the community as part of its mission. He suggested a topic of non-Roman script vendor records and their use/utility in cataloging workflows as a general theme of a program."

Recommendation # 7

Charge:

Continue to sponsor programs, preponderances, and continuing education on multilingual access, including Unicode implementation, standards, best practices, and user interface issues; collaborating with LITA and other groups, where appropriate

Implementation:

Completed

The CCS-Exec and CC-AAM presented a Forum at the ALA Annual 2008 at Anaheim on "International Authority issues: The TIME is NOW for Non-Roman Scripts in the Name Authority File" ([See Appendix 11](#))

ALCTS should continue to sponsor programs in this area.

Recommendation #8

Charge:

In keeping with ALA's commitment to a diverse library workplace, work with ACRL, PLA and other organizations to recruit library workers and specifically catalogers who are expert in one or more non-English languages

Implementation:

Completed

This was one of the most difficult recommendations to implement since the Steering Committee is not in a position to make recommendations to libraries regarding the hiring and recruitment of staff who are expert in one or more non English language. The Steering Committee discussed this at the ALCTS Big Heads meeting at the ALA Annual 2008, but there were no conclusions or advice on how to pursue this recommendation.

After a fair amount of discussion at the ALA annual 2008 on how to pursue this recommendation, the Steering Committee proposed creating a program to increase awareness of the needs to recruit Non-English Specialists. A program proposal was created at ALA and rushed to the ALCTS Program Committee. The program was approved. The Steering Committee contacted several groups to co-sponsor the program and we had five co-sponsors for the program (WESS, AANES, SEES, LLAMA and Casalini). An email message was sent to various listservs asking for proposals ([see <http://connect.ala.org/node/77019> and appendix 12](http://connect.ala.org/node/77019)). We also contacted some experienced librarians that have potential for presenting. We received numerous proposals from the library community. The Steering Committee examined each proposal and selected the top four proposals. The program was successful and the following are sample

presentations and the report that was prepared for the ALCTS Newsletter
(http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/alcts/resources/ano/v20/n3/event/progs_rpt.cfm)

Recommendation # 9

Charge:

Assign the CCS Cataloging of Children' Materials Committee to work with American Association of School Librarian (AASL), Association of Library Services to Children (ALSC) and PLA to identify specific needs for non-English speaking children in regards to library information.

Implementation:

Completed

The recommendation was discussed with the CCS Cataloging of Children's Materials. After a rough time, several options were considered and the Committee agreed to plan for a program for the 2010 ALA Annual Meeting. The Program form was already submitted and planning is under way.

Recommendation # 10

Charge:

Examine the use of romanized data in bibliographic and authority records. Explore the following issues (including costs and benefits):

1) Alternative models (Model A and Model B) for multiscrypt records are specified in the MARC 21 formats. The continuing use of 880 fields (that is, Model A records) has been questioned, but some libraries may need to continue to use Model A records. What issues does using both Model A and Model B cause for LC, utilities, and vendors?

(2) Requirements for access using non-Roman scripts (in general terms -- defining requirements for specific scripts falls under Recommendation 2)

(3) Requirements for access using Romanization

Implementation:

The Steering Committee discussed this recommendation and decided to draft a charge to MARBI as the appropriate group to handle this recommendation (see charge appendix 13 **ALCTS Non English MARBI charge**). MARBI was contacted several times and at last they informed the Steering Committee that they are not the appropriate body to take on this assignment. The Steering Committee discussed the recommendation again at the ALA Midwinter 2009 and decided to take a different approach. The Steering Committee wrote another charge (see appendix 14 **ALCTS Non English Romanization TF charge**). The Steering Committee asked for volunteers and received over forty applications. The committee reviewed the applications and selected ten members that included

representatives from the Library of Congress, OCLC, public libraries, academics and special libraries. The group began work immediately and established a group page on ALA Connect (see <http://connect.ala.org/node/76580>) to share information and progress reports in addition to soliciting feedback from those who were interested in the issues and were not selected to be members of the Task Force.

Members of the Task Force:

Robert Rendall, Chair (Columbia University)
Jian Wang (Saskatchewan Provincial Library, Ministry of Education)
Joseph (Yossi) Galron-Goldschlaeger (Ohio State University Libraries) Heidi G. Lerner (Stanford University Libraries)
Douglas Hasty (Florida International University)
Keiko Suzuki (Yale University)
Dave Reser (Library of Congress)
Sandra Nugraha (LC overseas offices)
Glenn E. Patton (OCLC)
Joyce Bell (Princeton)
Magda El-Sherbini, Liaison to the Steering Committee

The Working Group submitted their final report on time (December 15, 2009) and the following is the recommendation (see [WG Final Report Appendix 15](#)):

1. Most of the members of the Working Group believe that the factors discussed in this report are significant enough to make a general shift to **Model B in bibliographic records but the shift is premature at this point.** Some members of the Working Group feel that having romanized access points in records provides enough added value that their use should be continued indefinitely. Others believe that in an environment of shrinking staff and production pressures we should anticipate future developments in making our decision and recommend a move to Model B sooner rather than later. However, most believe that although a gradual move towards the use of Model B for current cataloging is probable, **we should continue the use of Model A for now as we prepare for a potential transition.**
2. Further research is needed into the remaining obstacles so that we can identify decision points that will allow us to move beyond the status quo. **We recommend that ALCTS sponsor a survey of libraries and library systems, and consult with library system vendors and developers of other tools used in libraries. This will provide us with a better understanding of the current situation and possible future directions from a technical perspective.**
3. Automatic transliteration software should be utilized to reduce time needed to create romanization from original script (or original script from romanization), when possible. This will be an option primarily for larger

libraries that have significant non-Roman collections and knowledgeable staff able to proofread and correct the results of automated processing.

4. Since different languages and scripts raise very different issues, some language/script cataloging communities may **decide to move to Model B sooner than others**. A coordinated decision to change practice within each community would be preferable to individual decisions to implement Model B across all scripts in different libraries at different times. Further research into the needs of specific user communities in different types of libraries should be conducted to guide these decisions.

5. Non-Roman text transcribed in descriptive fields should be entered in its original script whenever possible. Language/script cataloging communities should consider whether the amount of romanization in Model A records could be reduced by limiting it to those fields containing key data for access (such as titles and headings) which provide the benefits of romanization described in this report. Non-Roman text in other fields would then be entered in original script only, not in romanization only.

Recommendation # 11

Charge:

Assign the CCS Subject Analysis Committee (SAC) working with appropriate library organization, to study the needs of library users for multilingual subject access in the appropriate script(s), and to propose steps to address those needs

Implementation:

Members of the Steering Committee met with SAC at the ALA Midwinter and Annual 2008 meetings to explain to SAC what needs to be done in this recommendation. The issue was discussed again with SAC at the ALA Midwinter 2009 and SAC informed the Steering Committee that this issue is too broad and vague. ([See Daniel Joudrey's message, Chair, Subject Analysis Committee appendix 16 Recommendation 11 SAC responses](#))

Based on SAC responses, the Steering Committee discussed the recommendation again and decided that this recommendation is extremely vague. We recognized SAC's resistance to creating a task force that has as its charge: "...to study the needs of library users for multilingual subject access in the appropriate script(s), and to propose steps to address those needs." This is broad, and looks like a research project that might never be completed. We also recognized that this issue is outside SAC's scope. SAC doesn't do much research on end users or their needs, and that may be part of the difficulty here. What SAC typically does is work to determine how best to serve users' subject-related needs once those needs have been identified. They rely on others' research and expertise to inform them as to what those needs are. In a comment received from Michelle Robertson ([see Appendix 17 Michelle's comments on SAC's message](#)), she raised several issues that need to be resolved:

What is meant by multilingual subject access? Does this mean providing subject headings in multiple languages on a given record? Does it mean translating LC

headings into other languages, or does it mean using subject headings developed by other nations and organizations?

What method of studying users' needs would be appropriate? If a survey, what language(s) should the survey be provided in? Or do we only want the responses of those who understand English well enough to respond?

Academic vs. public library users' needs. These are very different populations. Study one, or the other, or both? If both, use different surveys for academic vs. public?

"I'm not sure that it is reasonable to ask SAC to interpret such a broad charge however they see fit. In order to make the work manageable, they would have to answer the questions above themselves, and narrow down the charge significantly – and in the end, the work they did would only answer a small portion of the charge as stated in the recommendation. Do we want to try answering some of these questions ourselves? Personally, I think the recommendation as written is too vague to be workable. So who should be responsible for fixing it?"

With the assistance of Beth Picknally, ([see Appendix 18 Beth's response on SAC's message](#)) the ALCTS Liaison to the Steering Committee and the Chair of the original TF on the Non-English, the following recommendation [? what's the right word here?] was made:

- This recommendation was issued in 2007. Is it still important today? An evaluation of this recommendation is needed.
- A survey of the literature to see what has been written on this topic since 2009 is needed. ([See Appendix 19](#))
- Forming an interest group within ALCTS to explore this issue further.

NEXT STEP:

The Steering Committee Recommend the following actions item to the ALCTS Executive Board
Create a Non-English Interest Group within ALCTS to continue the work of the Steering Committee.

Continue to sponsor preconferences and programs that are related to Non-English issues.
Continue monitoring the non-English discussion list and encourage audience to use it.
Promote research on the non-English subject access.

Special attention should be directed to each Working groups' recommendations for implementing recommendations 2/5, 10, and 11.

Appendixes

Appendix 1 [ALCTS Quarterly report 1 \(distributing assignments\).doc](#)

Appendix 2 [ALCTS Non English List announcement.docx](#)

- Appendix 3 [ALCTS Forum midwinter report\[1\].doc](#)
- Appendix 4 [ALCTS Non-English Steering Committee Forum, 2009\[1\].ppt](#)
- Appendix 5 Area Studies groups
- Appendix 6 [ALCTS non English Charge 2 and 5 combined 2.doc](#)
- Appendix 7 [LLSSWG survey report \[1\].doc](#)
- Appendix 8 Script and Languages Final Report
- Appendix 9 <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/pcc/bibco/coreintro.html#9>
- Appendix 10 <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/pcc/scs/Non-Latin-TF-Prelim-Report-Guidelines.pdf>
- Appendix 11 <http://mailman.yale.edu/pipermail/yulcat-1/2008-May/000596.html>
- Appendix 12 <http://connect.ala.org/node/77019>
[ALA_ALCTS_GoingGlobal_AHart\[1\].pdf](#)
[ALCTS non english -Presentation_ALA 2009\[1\].ppt](#)
[ALCTS Non english-Going global report\[1\].doc](#)
- Appendix 13 [ALCTS Non English MARBI charge Rec. 10.doc](#)
- Appendix 14 [ALCTS Non English_Romanization_TF_charge_rec 10.doc](#)
- Appendix 15 Romanization: Final Report a
Romanization: Final b
Romanization: Final c
- Appendix 16 [C:\Users\Owner\Documents\Recommendation 11 SAC responses.docx](#)
- Appendix 17 [C:\Users\Owner\Documents\Michelle's comments on SAC's message.docx](#)
- Appendix 18 [C:\Users\Owner\Documents\Beth's response on SAC's message.docx](#)
- Appendix 19 Bibliography on multilingual subject access