

More Layout Task Forces, Tony Graham, Mentea

eBooks & i18n: Richer Internationalization for eBooks Workshop

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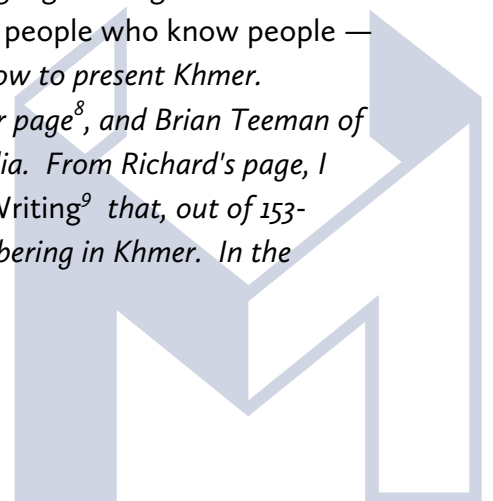
Two of the workshops topics – improving the use of Web technologies for handling multiple languages and issues with high-level language specific text layout – presuppose that we collectively know enough about the languages and scripts of interest to be able to work out how to do those things.

My position is that it would benefit richer internationalization for eBooks if the W3C both set up more task forces along the lines of the successful and beneficial Japanese Layout Task Force¹ and established some other mechanism, e.g., a Community Group² or a public wiki, for collecting information about too-small-a-community-for-a-Task-Force languages.

There is a lot of knowledge to be had, but as yet there is no good way to collect and preserve it for all languages.

If the W3C could set up Layout Task Forces for more languages and scripts, then we could have more details about more scripts and really give the Web technologies and high-level language specific text layout something to work with — *When I presented³ the case for more layout task forces at the MultilingualWeb Workshop⁴ in 2012, I was able to show 40 pages on information on Ruby from the Requirements for Japanese Text Layout⁵ document, one of the few explanatory graphics⁶ that represent all I know about Bopomofo Ruby, and the single example that I have of Pinyin Ruby.*

It shouldn't be hard to find out how to lay out text in other languages and get it to where it would be useful, and nor should it require a world-wide web of people who know people — *Another example from that talk highlighted how little I knew of how to present Khmer. Subsequently, Richard Ishida⁷ of the W3C pointed me to his Khmer page⁸, and Brian Teeman of Joomla! put me in touch with some Joomla! developers in Cambodia. From Richard's page, I found a reference to Franklin Huffman's Cambodian System of Writing⁹ that, out of 153-pages, contained half a page on page numbering and section numbering in Khmer. In the*



absence of anywhere else for it to be publicly visible, I blogged¹⁰ about it so it could at least be found in web searches. One of the Cambodians, in a blog comment¹¹, wished that the Khmer consonants were supported as a list type in CSS3 lists. Drawing on the knowledge of Sovann Heng and Danh Hong, I was able to submit a proposal¹² for the Khmer consonant counter style to the www-style@w3.org mailing list.

Finding enough experts to be able to do a good job for all languages is a very real problem, but it could perhaps be more easily solved by inverting the problem and establishing a central point (that has a low barrier to entry and a tolerance for conflicting opinions) and letting the experts find it — *The Khmer consonant counter style was accepted¹³ for inclusion in the CSS3-lists module, but it also proved a tipping point for inclusion of counter style definitions. www-style posts soon turned to how the CSS WG didn't have enough experts in all languages to do a good job for all languages¹⁴, and in their face-to-face meeting in August 2012, the CSS WG resolved to remove all but a minimum of counter styles from the WD and to set up a counter styles registry on the W3C wiki¹⁵. At the time of this writing, most counter styles have been removed from what is now the CSS Counter Styles Level 3 WD¹⁶, but I have yet to find any counter styles registry.*

¹ <http://www.w3.org/2007/02/japanese-layout/>

² <http://www.w3.org/community/about/>

³ <http://www.mentea.net/resources/multilingualweb2012.pdf>

⁴ <http://www.multilingualweb.eu/en/documents/luxembourg-workshop/luxembourg-program>

⁵ <http://www.w3.org/TR/jlreq/>

⁶ http://www.edu.tw/files/site_content/M0001/juyin/jb98.htm?open

⁷ <http://rishida.net/>

⁸ <http://rishida.net/scripts/khmer/>

⁹ <http://www.pratyeka.org/csw/hlp-csw.pdf>

¹⁰ <http://inasmuch.as/2012/03/22/khmer-pagination/>

¹¹ <http://inasmuch.as/2012/03/22/khmer-pagination/comment-page-1/#comment-8117>

¹² <http://lists.w3.org/Archives/Public/www-style/2012Jul/0290.html>

¹³ <http://lists.w3.org/Archives/Public/www-style/2012Jul/0292.html>

¹⁴ <http://lists.w3.org/Archives/Public/www-style/2012Jul/0314.html>

¹⁵ <http://lists.w3.org/Archives/Public/www-style/2012Aug/0899.html>

¹⁶ <http://www.w3.org/TR/css-counter-styles-3/>