UPDATES TO THE REPORT ON THE CURRENT STATUS OF
UNITED NATIONS ROMANIZATION SYSTEMS
FOR GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

Submitted by the UNGEGN Working Group on Romanization Systems

This document contains updated sections from the Report on the Current Status of United Nations Romanization Systems for Geographical Names, as presented to the Eighth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (UNCSGN) in Berlin, 2002 (Version 2.1, June 2002; document E/CONF.94/CRP.81 and Add.1 and Corr.1). These sections have been recompiled, based on information received at the 8th UNCSGN and subsequently. Some additional information is also presented in the Report by the Convenor of the Working Group on Romanization Systems to the 22nd Session of UNGEGN.


Changes between Version 2.1 and Version 2.2 include the following.
1. Romanization system for Thai was updated according to Resolution VIII/13. The text was further revised in July, 2003, following comments from the Royal Thai Survey Department. Current version is awaiting final approval from the Royal Thai Survey Department.
2. The term "Serbo-Croatian Cyrillic" was changed into "Serbian Cyrillic" according to Resolution VIII/14.
3. A new national provisional romanization system for Dzongkha of 1997 was introduced in the report, replacing the system of 1994. Currently discussions are continuing on modifications to the system.
4. Information on the proposed modifications to the UN recommended system of romanization for Arabic was included.
5. Details of the national provisional romanization system for Khmer (1995) were provided.
6. Information on the romanization of Burmese was updated and notes added to the table of abbreviated vowel characters. Note 5 was rephrased, some other examples added.
7. References to new documents submitted to the Eighth UNCSGN were included in the sections for Arabic and Korean.
Arabic

The United Nations recommended romanization system was approved in 1972 (resolution II/8), based on the system adopted by Arabic experts at the conference held at Beirut in 1971 with the practical amendments carried out and agreed upon by the representatives of the Arabic-speaking countries at their conference. The table was published in volume II of the conference report1.

In the UN resolution it was specifically pointed out that the system was recommended "for the romanization of the geographical names within those Arabic-speaking countries where this system is officially acknowledged". It cannot be definitely ascertained which of the Arabic-speaking countries have adopted this system officially. Judging by the use of names in international cartographic products which rely mostly on national sources it appears that the UN system is more or less current in Iraq, Kuwait, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Saudi Arabia2, United Arab Emirates and Yemen, there and in some other countries the system is often used without diacritical marks. For the geographical names of the Syrian Arab Republic the international maps favour the UN system while the local usage seems to prefer a French-oriented romanization. Also in Egypt and Sudan there exist local romanization schemes or practices side by side with the UN system. The geographical names of Algeria, Djibouti, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia are generally rendered in the traditional manner which conforms to the principles of the French orthography.

Resolution 7 of the Seventh UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (1998) recommended that “the League of Arab States should, through its specialized structures, continue its efforts to organize a conference with a view to considering the difficulties encountered in applying the amended Beirut system of 1972 for the romanization of Arabic script, and submit, as soon as possible, a solution to the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names”. At the Eighth UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (2002), the Arabic Division of the UN Group of Experts announced that it had finalised proposed modifications to the UN recommended romanization system. These proposals would be submitted to the League of Arab States for approval.

Arabic is written from right to left. The Arabic script usually omits vowel points and diacritical marks from writing which makes it difficult to obtain uniform results in the romanization of Arabic. It is essential to identify correctly the words which appear in any particular name and to know the standard Arabic-script spelling including proper pointing. One must also take into account dialectal and idiosyncratic deviations. The romanization is generally reversible though there are some ambiguous letter sequences (dh, kh, sh, th) which may also point to combinations of Arabic characters in addition to the respective single characters.

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Romanization

In the romanization system below column 1 denotes an independent consonant character, column 2 the initial, column 3 the medial and column 4 the final form of a character. Column 5 gives the romanization equivalent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>أ</td>
<td>أ</td>
<td>أ</td>
<td>أ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>ر</td>
<td>ر</td>
<td>ر</td>
<td>ر</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>ط</td>
<td>ط</td>
<td>ط</td>
<td>ط</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>ص</td>
<td>ص</td>
<td>ص</td>
<td>ص</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>ب</td>
<td>ب</td>
<td>ب</td>
<td>ب</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>س</td>
<td>س</td>
<td>س</td>
<td>س</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>ت</td>
<td>ت</td>
<td>ت</td>
<td>ت</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>ش</td>
<td>ش</td>
<td>ش</td>
<td>ش</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>ث</td>
<td>ث</td>
<td>ث</td>
<td>ث</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>ض</td>
<td>ض</td>
<td>ض</td>
<td>ض</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>ح</td>
<td>ح</td>
<td>ح</td>
<td>ح</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>د</td>
<td>د</td>
<td>د</td>
<td>د</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>خ</td>
<td>خ</td>
<td>خ</td>
<td>خ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>ق</td>
<td>ق</td>
<td>ق</td>
<td>ق</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>ذ</td>
<td>ذ</td>
<td>ذ</td>
<td>ذ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>ن</td>
<td>ن</td>
<td>ن</td>
<td>ن</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>د</td>
<td>د</td>
<td>د</td>
<td>د</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>غ</td>
<td>غ</td>
<td>غ</td>
<td>غ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A Not romanized word-initially.
B Not romanized, but see romanizations accompanying alif (i) in the table for vowels.
C In certain endings, an original tāʾ (ت) is written ṭāʾ, i.e., like hāʾ (ɦ) with two dots, and is known as tāʾ marbūta. It is romanized h, except in the construct form of feminine nouns, where it is romanized ṭ, instead.

Vowels, diphthongs and diacritical marks (• stands for any consonant)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>•</th>
<th>a</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>•</th>
<th>(A)</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>•</th>
<th>ā</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>ء</td>
<td>aw</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>ء</td>
<td>ā</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>a'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>ء</td>
<td>ay</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>آ</td>
<td>ā</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>i'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>ī</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>u'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>ū</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>(B)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A Marks absence of the vowel.
B Marks doubling of the consonant.

Note. When the definite article al precedes a word beginning with one of the "sun letters" (t, th, d, dh, r, z, s, sh, g, d, f, z, l, n) the l of the definite article is assimilated with the first consonant of the word: الشارقة.
Other systems of romanization

The proposed changes (2002) to the UN system agreed to by the Arab delegations to the Eighth UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names in Berlin (2002) envisage the following:

1. the character ( יח) to be romanized as *dh* instead of *z*;
2. the cedilla (ř) to be replaced by a sub-macron (ř) in all characters with cedillas.

The BGN/PCGN 1956 System is identical to the UN system. The only difference lies in the treatment of articles. The original transliteration table, published in vol. I of the report on the Second UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, contains examples (but not explicit rules) where the definite article is always written with a small initial and connected by hyphen to the main part of the name, e.g. "al-Baṣrah, الرياض ar-Riyāḍ. The practice of the BGN and the PCGN, however, is not to use hyphens between articles and names and to capitalize the first definite article in a name, e.g. Al Baṣrah, Ar Riyāḍ.

The I.G.N. System 1973 (sometimes also called Variant B of the Amended Beirut System) has the following equivalents to the romanizations of the amended Beirut system⁴:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UN</th>
<th>I.G.N.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>= a, e, é, ê^A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å</td>
<td>= å, ê^A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>â</td>
<td>= a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ì</td>
<td>= i, ê^A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ï</td>
<td>= i, ê^A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j</td>
<td>= dj, j^A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>= n, ne^B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>q</td>
<td>= q, g^A, gu^C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s</td>
<td>= s, ss^B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>š</td>
<td>= š, ñ^E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>z</td>
<td>= z</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>š</td>
<td>= sh = ch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ţ</td>
<td>= ţ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ũ</td>
<td>= ou, o^A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ū</td>
<td>= ou, õ^A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>w</td>
<td>= ou</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>y</td>
<td>= i, i^E, y^G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ɨ</td>
<td>= ’ (not romanized)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ˁ</td>
<td>= ’, aa^H</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^A Used according to the local pronunciation.
^B ne is used word-finally after a, e, i, o.
^C gu is used before e and i.
^D ss is used between vowels.
^E ű is used in some conventional names.
^F ţ is used as second element of a diphthong.
^G y is used word-initially or between vowels.
^H aa is specific to Lebanon.

The transliteration ISO 233:1984 gives every character and diacritical mark a unique equivalent and e.g. long vowels in Arabic â, ì and å are consequently written a’, iy and uw respectively in the ISO transliteration. Other main correspondences:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UN</th>
<th>ISO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>â ( ā)</td>
<td>= a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>á</td>
<td>= a^A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ã</td>
<td>= â</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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The Royal Jordanian Geographic Centre (RJGC) System is essentially the same as the amended Beirut system. The sub-macron is used instead of the cedilla.

The Survey of Egypt System (SES) of romanization has the following correspondences with the UN system:

In Algeria there is at present no official romanization system, the prospects of establishing such a system are being discussed in the Permanent Commission for Toponymy (CPST) at the National Council of Geographical Information (CNIG). A system that is used in Lebanon, close to the I.G.N. 1973 System, is mentioned in ISO 3166-2:1998 (Codes for the representation of names of countries and their subdivisions. Part 2: Country subdivision code): Principles for romanization from Lebanese Arabic to Latin Characters (National Ministry of Defence of the Lebanese Republic 1963). However, in 2002 Lebanon submitted a document where all geographical names were romanized using the UN system. In Mauritania, the romanized name forms in official maps edited since 1969 have been rendered in accordance with a simplified

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version of the I.G.N. system\(^8\). In *Morocco* the official romanization system for Arabic script
dates from June 17, 1932, although changes to this are being planned\(^9\). In *Tunisia* the Directorate
of Topography and Cartography adopted in 1983 officially the amended Beirut system with
minor modifications (e.g. adding a letter g to the table).

## Khmer

The United Nations recommended system was approved in 1972 (resolution II/10), based on the
system used by the BGN/PCGN (1972), this being a modified version of the Service
Géographique Khmère (SGK) 1959 system. The table and notes on its usage were published in
volume II of the conference report\(^10\).

The system is used in many international cartographic products. In 1994-1995 the Gazetteer of
Cambodia was produced using this system with some proposed modifications. However, since
1995 the Geography Department of the Ministry of Land Management and Urban Planning of
Cambodia has been developing a new romanization system which was subsequently used in the
second edition of the Gazetteer of Cambodia in 1996. This provisional system which does not
contain any diacritical marks was further modified in 1997.

Khmer uses an alphasyllabic script whereby each character represents a syllable rather than one
sound. Vowels and diphthongs are marked in two ways: as independent characters (used syllable-
initially) and in an abbreviated form, to denote vowels after consonants. The romanization system
is complicated by many additional rules. In Khmer writing word division is not ordinarily
indicated and Khmer diacritical marks are often omitted. The romanization is generally not
reversible to its original script form.

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Romanization

I. Consonant characters

2. khá 7. chhà 12. thà 17. thà 22. phà 27. rò 31. hà
5. ngò 10. nhò 15. nà 20. nó 25. mò

A If used with a subscript character the lower element of the character is omitted: nhchô.
B If used with a subscript character the romanization of the character will be p (see note 4).
C See note 5.

II. Subscript consonant characters (see also note 3)

Character numbers correspond to those in Table I.

2. kh 7. chh 12. th 17. th 22. ph 27. r 31. h
5. ng 10. nh 15. n 20. n 25. m

A With the same base character, is used (nh), in all other cases only the lower element is used as subscript, e.g. khnhà.

III. Independent vowel characters

1. è 3. ô, 8. ê 9. è 11. aô
2. ei 4. au 6. rë 7. lè 10. ai 12. au

A See note 10.
B Variation: è.

IV. Vocalic nuclei (∗ stands for any consonant character)
Where variants in romanization separated by a dash are given the first is to be used in the ā-series and the second in the ō-series.

1. ā—éá^ 5. ōe 9. æu—eu 13. ò•  ě
2. ĕ—î 6. ō—ū 10. ë•  œā 14. ë•  ai—ey
3. ei—i 7. œ—u 11. ë•  ĕ 15. ë•  aō—oū
4. œ 8. ōō 12. ë•  ě 16. ë•  au—oū

^ With the character ṛ p a ligature ṛl is used (see note 4).

V. Shortened syllables and vocalic nuclei with anusvara or visarga
Where variants in romanization separated by a dash are given the one before the dash is to be used in the ā-series and the one(s) after the dash in the ō-series.

1. á—ó 4. ōm—um 7. ah—eāh 10. ë•  aōh—oāh
2. ō—ōā,eā^ 5. om—ūm 8. ōh—ūh 11. ñ ō̄ŋ—eāŋ
3. ō—ōā,eā^ 6. ōm—ōām 9. ë•  ēh

^ eā if followed by k, ng, h; otherwise oā (see note 6).

Notes
1. Khmer consonants are divided into 2 series, the ā-series and the ō-series, as indicated in the consonant table. With vocalic nuclei these consonants may produce different romanizations, as shown in the abbreviated vowel table: fī kā, ṛ fī krā, ṛ fī kō, ṛ fī krō. A Khmer consonant in syllable-final position, not accompanied by a vowel marker or by ∗, should generally be romanized without a vowel letter following: fī fī kāk, pōng rō̄k (exception: pōngrō̄k, also written pōng rō̄k and pōng rō̄h).
2. The Khmer diacritical mark ⌐ or ∗ written above an ā-series consonant (except ṛ and ṛl; see note 4) changes it to the ō-series: ṛnā khōng. The diacritical mark ∗ written above an ō-series consonant changes it to the ā-series: ān. When either of these marks would conflict with another symbol written above a character, the mark ∗ or • may be written in its place: fī hi, fī dāmrei. (These marks are frequently omitted in Khmer writing, particularly in words of Indic provenance.)
3. The second consonant of a Khmer graphic cluster is generally written below the base consonant in the special form called a "foot": khnāng. There is no foot for the character lā. The "feet" • and ∗ usually represent the characters ְ and ṛ respectively, rather than ā.
and ក (kdei, ក្មារ kānthéay, but ក្បូជ kāntrāb.
A "foot" determines the series of the following vocalic nucleus unless it is a nasal ((); nh, ញ n, ញ l, ញ m) or យ y, ឈ r, យ l, យ v, យ s. In that case, the base consonant determines the vocalic series: ឈឈ ឈឈ ឈឈ ឈឈ ឈឈ ឈឈ ឈឈ ឈឈ ឈឈ ឈឈ ឈឈ ឈឈ. Syllable-final ឈ and ឈ sometimes appear as "feet": ឈឈ or ឈឈ ឈ, ឈ in or ឈ teăng. This practice appears to be optional and such irregular Khmer spellings are not reflected as such in romanization.
4. The combination ឈ plus ឈ is written ឈ ba. The latter character is a graphic device designed to prevent confusion with ឈ hā. The characters ឈ and ឈ with the diacritical mark • are romanized p in the ឈ-series, rather than as b in the ឈ-series: ឈឈ pāng, ឈឈ patau. The diacritical mark • or • is substituted where a conflict with another symbol written above a character would occur: ឈ ឈ. The characters ឈ and ឈ when accompanied by a "foot" are also romanized as p in the ឈ-series, although the Khmer diacritical mark is generally omitted: ឈឈ plēng, ឈ p’ā, ឈ prāb.
5. The ឈ-series consonant ឈ is romanized by means of an apostrophe (‘): ឈឈ k‘èk, ឈឈ châng‘īk, ឈឈ rō‘èl, ឈ ឈ ឈ ឈ ‘vei, ឈ ឈ ឈ ឈ ឈ ang. In word-initial position before a vowel, ’ may be omitted: ឈ ឈ ឈ ឈ ang.
6. The Khmer diacritical mark • appears only in two combinations: •• (examples: ឈឈ bát, ឈឈ khpōs) and •. The diacritical mark • appears only in the combination ••. In the ឈ-series both ឈ• and •• are romanized ā: ឈឈ and ឈឈ are both romanized chāk. In the ឈ-series both •• and •• are romanized eā when followed by k, ng or h; otherwise, they are romanized oā: ឈឈ rōpeāk, ឈឈ moôt, ឈឈ veā̃gōk, ឈឈ phoāpv.
7. The combination ឈ is romanized r before a consonant: ឈឈ thōrm. The combination • is romanized as r before a consonant preceded by a shortened vocalic nucleus: ឈឈ koār.
8. The symbol • in syllable-initial position is ignored in romanization: ឈឈ sā, ឈឈ sāsā. In syllable-final position • indicates that the consonant is vowelled, i.e. followed by ā in the ឈ-series, by ā in the ឈ-series: ឈឈ tāmā, ឈឈ pōmō.
9. The diacritical mark (which appears above characters and/or vowel markers which are not vocalized) is ignored in romanization: ឈឈ bōn, ឈឈ poūhī, ឈឈ phumī.
10. The independent character ឈ is romanized either ā or ā. A reference source should be consulted where doubt arises.
Other systems of romanization

The provisional romanization system by the Geography Department\(^{11}\) of the Ministry of Land Management and Urban Planning of Cambodia (1995, modified 1997) renders the consonants in the same way as described above but the presentation of vowels is somewhat different. As a rule, diacritical signs used in the UN system are omitted but the following equivalents are different. (Numbers refer to the tables and characters in the UN system. Some of the provided romanizations have no explicit counterparts in the UN system.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Char.</th>
<th>UN system</th>
<th>Provisional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>III.3</td>
<td>ə, ü</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>ə̄a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III.4</td>
<td>(not given)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III.5</td>
<td>rë</td>
<td>rue</td>
<td>au—ōu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III.6</td>
<td>rœ</td>
<td>rueu</td>
<td>ā—oā,cā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III.7</td>
<td>lē</td>
<td>lue</td>
<td>ā—oā,cā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III.8</td>
<td>ĉe</td>
<td>ae</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III.9</td>
<td>ē</td>
<td>ae</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III.12</td>
<td>au</td>
<td>ov</td>
<td>aōh—ōāh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV.4</td>
<td>ĉe</td>
<td>oe—ue</td>
<td>(not given)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV.5</td>
<td>ɐe</td>
<td>cu—ueu</td>
<td>(not given)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV.7</td>
<td>o—u</td>
<td>ou—u</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Where variants in romanization separated by a dash are given the one before the dash is to be used in the ā-series and the one(s) after the dash in the ə-series. Uncertain romanization equivalents are indicated by a question mark.

Before the last modification in 1997 to the system was made, the vowel \( a / ā \) in combinations ɐ, ɐ̄ and ɐ̕ (see UN system, Table IV, line 1, Table V, lines 2 and 3) was romanized as \( \text{aa} \), and the vowel ē in the combination ɐ̕ (Table IV, line 12) was romanized as \( \text{ee} \).

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**Serbian**

The United Nations recommended system was approved in 1977 (III/11), based on the Roman equivalent of the Serbo-Croatian Cyrillic alphabet that had long been employed in official gazetteers and maps of Yugoslavia. The table was published as an annex to the resolution. The term relating to the language (Serbian instead of Serbo-Croatian) was modified in 2002 (resolution VIII/14).

The system is used in Serbia and Montenegro, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and in international cartographic products.

Serbian uses the Cyrillic script that is alphabetic. The romanization table is unambiguous and can be applied automatically. The system is reversible.

**Romanization**

| 1  | Аа а   | 9  | Зз з   | 17 | Њњ nj | 25 | Фф f   |
| 2  | Бб b   | 10 | Ии i   | 18 | Оо o   | 26 | Хх h   |
| 3  | Вв v   | 11 | Јј j   | 19 | Пп p   | 27 | Цц c   |
| 4  | Гг g   | 12 | Кк k   | 20 | Рр r   | 28 | Чч č   |
| 5  | Дд d   | 13 | Лл l   | 21 | Сс s   | 29 | Іі dž  |
| 6  |Ћђ d (D)| 14 | Љљ lj | 22 | Тт t   | 30 | Іі š   |
| 7  | Ее e   | 15 | Мм m   | 23 |Ћћ ĉ   |
| 8  | Жж ž   | 16 | Нн n   | 24 | Уу u   |

Note. Cursive forms of some characters might be formed differently: Аа Бб Вв Гг Дд Њђ Њј Ее Жж Зз Ии Јј Кк Лл Љљ Мм Нн Оо Пп Сс Тт Уу Фф Хх Цц Чч Іі Шш Іі Шш.

**Thai**

The United Nations recommended system was first approved in 1967 (resolution I/14), based on the modified general system of the Royal Institute of Thailand. The table and notes on its application were published in vol. II of the conference reports. A revised version of the system was officially endorsed by the government of Thailand in 2000. This was approved at the Eighth United Nations Conference for the Standardization of Geographical Names in Berlin, 2002, based on a document submitted by Thailand.

Thai uses an alphasyllabic script. In Thai writing word division is not ordinarily indicated which

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may complicate the romanization. The romanization system is not reversible to its original script form.

**Romanization**

Thai characters are romanized in two ways depending on whether they denote syllable-initials or syllable-finals. The romanization of syllable-finals is indicated in parentheses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Thai Character</th>
<th>Romanization (without finals)</th>
<th>Romanization (with finals)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>ก (k)</td>
<td>ก (k)</td>
<td>ก (k)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>ข (k)</td>
<td>ข (k)</td>
<td>ข (k)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>ว (k)</td>
<td>ว (k)</td>
<td>ว (k)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>เข (k)</td>
<td>เข (k)</td>
<td>เข (k)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>เบ (k)</td>
<td>เบ (k)</td>
<td>เ� (k)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>เต (k)</td>
<td>เต (k)</td>
<td>เ� (k)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Vocalic nuclei and special characters** (• stands for any consonant character)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Vocalic Nuclei</th>
<th>Special Characters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>อ (a)</td>
<td>อ•อ•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>อ (a)</td>
<td>อ•อoe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>อ (a)</td>
<td>อ•อea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>อ (a)</td>
<td>อ•อia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>อ (a)</td>
<td>อ•อæ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>อ (a)</td>
<td>อ•อææ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>อ (a)</td>
<td>อ•อæææ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>อ (a)</td>
<td>อ•อææææ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>อ (a)</td>
<td>อ•อæææææ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>อ (a)</td>
<td>อ•อææææææ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>อ (a)</td>
<td>อ•อæææææææ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>อ (a)</td>
<td>อ•อææææææææ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A Combination ณ รก is romanized รก if so pronounced.

B See note 5.
Notes\textsuperscript{15}

1. In multi-syllable words, the final character of the preceding syllable and the initial character of the succeeding syllable may cause reading ambiguity. Therefore hyphen is used for syllable separation according to the following rules:
   a. Hyphen is inserted when the final character of the preceding syllable is a vowel and the initial character of the succeeding syllable is ng (ง), e.g. ทรง sa-nga.
   b. Hyphen is inserted when the final character of the preceding syllable is ng (ง) and the initial character of the succeeding syllable is a vowel, e.g. ปั้น Bang-on.
   c. Hyphen is inserted when the initial character of the succeeding syllable is a vowel, e.g. สาวตรี sa-at, สาวตรี sam-ang.

2. A word followed by maiyamok (ฎ) is written twice according to the reading rules, e.g. ท่าบ่อ ){\textasciitilde} tham boi boi, ไฟไหม้ ){\textasciitilde} fai mai fai mai.

3. Words followed by paiyannoi (ฏ), which shortens forms of a well known word or words, are written in full according to the reading rules, e.g. กรุงเทพฯ Krung Thep Maha Nakhon, โปรตกลาส protklaa protkramom.

4. An initial อ as a vowel-bearer which is phonetically a glottal stop [ʔ] is ignored.

5. One must bear in mind that the romanization of Thai in this case employs the transcription method. Thus, tone marks (’, , , and ′) and diacritical marks including the silencing mark (ʼ) and the vowel shortening mark (‘), are completely ignored. In order to transcribe Thai words correctly one must know how to read and pronounce them. There are many words that carry a character or characters that are not pronounced, such as สามาค samat (ฎ is silent), ศรี Phrom (ฦ is silent), แลก lak (ฦๅ scrollbar are silent), ที่ that (้, is silent), นิทรรศ inthanu (ฦ are silent), and there are also a number of words in Thai where a syllable with

an intruding vowel [a] must be inserted such as 妙اء nam Prathana (i is silent and [tha] is inserted), and ကိုလော rattana ([ta] is inserted) when pronouncing them.

6. When using geographical names romanized according to the previous 1967 version of the official Thai romanization system, it is essential to know that earlier no distinction was made between the vowels u and ue (u was used in both cases, this applied to characters 9, 10, 11, 30, 31, 46, 54, 55, 56 and 57 in the table for vocalic nuclei and special characters) and some diphthongs were romanized differently (iu for character 48 /now io/, ieo for character 53 /now iao/ in the table mentioned).

**Other systems of romanization**

The transliteration of Thai in the standard ISO 11940:1998\(^\text{16}\) gives each Thai character a unique equivalent in the Roman script (a single letter or a combination of a letter plus a "modifier letter"). The Thai characters are transliterated strictly in the order they are written, diacritical marks accompanying a consonant are transliterated starting by the uppermost mark and finishing with the subscript mark. As an example, here are some transliteration equivalents: ឈ k, ព kh, ភ kh, យ k’h, ល kh, រ ng; ួ a, ើ a, ឿ à, ុ ñ, ូ è, ួ æ, etc.

**Burmesse**

No romanization systems for Burmese have been put forward at the United Nations conferences on the standardization of geographical names or at sessions of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names. Currently there is no official system of romanization in Myanmar. In 1989 the government of Myanmar changed the spellings of the names of several cities in Myanmar to bring them closer to Burmese pronunciation but this was done on an ad hoc basis\(^\text{17}\).

The only known romanization system of Burmese is that of the BGN and the PCGN (1970) which is based on the 1907 version of the *Tables for the Transliteration of Burmese into English*, published in 1908 by the Office of the Superintendent, Government Printing, Rangoon, Burma.

Burmese uses an alphasyllabic script. The romanization is not reversible to its original script form.

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System of romanization

The BGN/PCGN 1970 System is given below.

I. Consonant characters

1. \( \text{ka}^A \) 6. \( \text{sa}^A \) 11. \( \text{ta}^A \) 16. \( \text{ta}^A \) 21. \( \text{pa}^A \) 26. \( \text{ya} \) 31. \( \text{ha} \)
2. \( \text{ka}^A \) 7. \( \text{sa}^A \) 12. \( \text{ta}^A \) 17. \( \text{ta}^A \) 22. \( \text{pa}^A \) 27. \( \text{ya} \) 32. \( \text{la} \)
3. \( \text{ga} \) 8. \( \text{za} \) 13. \( \text{da} \) 18. \( \text{da} \) 23. \( \text{ba} \) 28. \( \text{la} \) 33. \( \text{a}^D \)
4. \( \text{ga} \) 9. \( \text{za} \) 14. \( \text{da} \) 19. \( \text{da} \) 24. \( \text{ba} \) 29. \( \text{wa} \)
5. \( \text{nga} \) 10. \( \text{nya}^B \) 15. \( \text{na} \) 20. \( \text{na} \) 25. \( \text{ma} \) 30. \( \text{tha}^C \)

A See note 1.
B Syllable-final variant character: \( \text{za} \).
C Syllable-final variant character: \( \text{na} \).
D See note 3.

II. Independent vowel characters (see also note 4)

1. \( \text{i} \) 3. \( \text{u} \) 5. \( \text{e}^A \) 7. \( \text{a}^B \)
2. \( \text{i} \) 4. \( \text{u} \) 6. \( \text{e} \)

A This character is actually an abbreviation, a genitive/declarative marker.
B Also used in combination with abbreviated vowel characters: \( \text{e}^A \), \( \text{e}^B \).

III. Abbreviated vowel characters (\( \cdot \) stands for any consonant character)

1. \( \cdot \text{an} \) 3. \( \cdot \text{i} \) 5. \( \cdot \text{u}^B \) 7. \( \cdot \text{e} \) 9. \( \cdot \text{aw}^A \) 11. \( \cdot \text{e} \)
2. \( \cdot \text{a}^A \) 4. \( \cdot \text{i} \) 6. \( \cdot \text{u}^B \) 8. \( \cdot \text{aw}^A \) 10. \( \cdot \text{o}^B \)

A To avoid graphic confusion with some other characters, \( \cdot \) is replaced by \( \text{I} \) and \( \text{I} \) by \( \text{T} \) after consonant characters \( \text{ka}, \text{ga}, \text{nga}, \text{da}, \text{pa}, \text{wa} \), and \( \text{ba} \). After consonant characters, \( \text{za} \), \( \text{ta} \), \( \text{da} \), \( \text{pa} \) and \( \text{ba} \) this practice seems to be optional.
B If in conflict with another subscript symbol, a vowel character \( \text{I} \) or \( \text{I} \) may be written after consonant characters, with a prolonged upper part, e.g. \( \text{a}^A \text{I} \text{kyu} \), \( \text{a}^B \text{I} \text{myo} \).

IV. Other symbols (\( \cdot \) stands for any consonant character)

1. \( \cdot \text{y}^A \) 2. \( \cdot \text{y}^B \) 3. \( \cdot \text{-w} \) 4. \( \cdot \text{h}^C \) 5. \( \cdot \text{in}^D \) 6. \( \cdot \text{E} \)

A Exceptional romanization: \( \text{cha} \) (see also note 1).
B Exceptional romanization: \( \text{cha} \) (see also note 1).
C Adds \( h \) before the consonant, e.g. \( \text{h} \text{ma} \); exceptional romanization: \( \text{sha} \) (\( \text{sha} \)).
D Adds -\( in \) to the end of the preceding syllable: \( \text{in} \text{gala Aw} \).
E End-of-syllable mark (marks the absence of the inherent vowel). Symbols 1, 2 and 3 may also occur in combinations: \( \text{y}^A \text{-w}, \text{y}^B \text{-w} \).
V. Syllable endings (• stands for any initial consonant character; syllables beginning with o may have different romanization equivalents, these are also listed below)

1. • • • et 17 • • • eik 33 • • • ein 49 • • • un
2. • • • eik 18 • • • ōk 34 • • • ōn 50 • • • wun
3. • • • ōk 19 • • • ut 35 • • • un 51 • • • è
4. • • • aik 20 • • • wut 36 • • • wun 52 • • • an
5. • • • auk 21 • • • it 37 • • • an 53 • • • aing
6. • • • et 22 • • • at 38 • • • ein 54 • • • at
7. • • • in 23 • • • wut 39 • • • ōn 55 • • • eik
8. • • • ein 24 • • • wut 40 • • • aing 56 • • • in
9. • • • aing 25 • • • at 41 • • • at 57 • • • an
10. • • • aung 26 • • • eik 42 • • • eik 58 • • • ein
11. • • • it 27 • • • ōk 43 • • • ōk 59 • • • ōn
12. • • • ōk 28 • • • at 44 • • • ut 60 • • • un
13. • • • it 29 • • • at 45 • • • wut 61 • • • wun
14. • • • eik 30 • • • eik 46 • • • an 62 • • • at
15. • • • i,in,e^A 31 • • • at 47 • • • ein
16. • • • at 32 • • • an 48 • • • ōn

^A The choice of romanization depends on the actual pronunciation.

Notes
1. Certain consonant sounds change their value if used after any vowel letter or nasal consonant except as cited in note 5. The changes, as expressed in Roman letters, are the following:
   - ch → gy
   - k → g
   - p → b
   - s → z
   - t → d
2. In romanization, -a is always accompanying the Burmese consonant character unless this has got a dependent vowel character or an end-of-syllable mark: အီ ဗဒ် ma-ma.
3. At the beginning of a word, the character အ should not be romanized, unless followed by a consonant character that does not bear a vowel character or an end-of-syllable mark, in which case the character အ should be romanized a: အီး ဗဒ် aga, but အီး ဗဒ် obè, အီ at. At the beginning of a medial or final syllable, အ should be rendered by a hyphen: အီ ma-u, အီးဗဒ် Thibin-aing.
4. The independent vowel characters should be romanized with a hyphen at the beginning of medial and final syllables: ဗတ်ဗ် ဗရ် kye-e.
5. When two consonant characters are written one above the other without an end-of-syllable mark, the upper character should be romanized first, followed by the lower character, and then the vowel and consonant characters, if any: ပုး panyza, အီးအီးတြပေါ် andimabawa.
Alternative romanizations, as indicated in note 1, do not apply to the upper character: ꞌ_written theta, ꞏ_written missa, Ꞓ_written ukkada.

6. When the letter n at the end of a syllable is followed by g or y at the beginning of the next syllable, hyphen should be added in between them; similarly hyphen should be used between t and h if they are in different syllables: ꞏ_strlen in-gut‘ (but ꞌ_strlen shwengan).

7. Tone marks Ꞑ and ꞑ should not be romanized.

Dzongkha

No romanization systems for Dzongkha have been put forward at the United Nations conferences on the standardization of geographical names or at sessions of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names.

In 1991 the first phonological romanization for Dzongkha was introduced by the Dzongkha Development Commission. Roman Dzongkha as it was called, was intended to accurately and adequately represent the phonology of the living language and to serve as a standard for representing Dzongkha names and words in the international media. However, the system was not implemented, and later a simplified version of Roman Dzongkha was devised by the same Commission. Bhutan's Ministry of Home Affairs approved the implementation of Roman Dzongkha on May 29, 1997 and made it mandatory for all government institutions to use standardized spellings of geographical names and the guidelines for romanization.

Dzongkha uses an alphasyllabic script (Uchen) which occurs in two main forms. The printed or uncial writing (tshum) is actually the same as is used in Tibetan. But Bhutanese longhand writing (formal version, jotshum, and cursive version, joyi) is unique to Dzongkha, making ample use of ligatures. Below only the printed form of characters is presented, for longhand writing one should refer to Dzongkha language manuals\(^{18}\). Relationship between script and pronunciation is complex and romanized names cannot be reverted to their original script forms.

\(^{18}\) See e.g. Dzongkha by George van Driem with the collaboration of Karma Tshering of Gaselö. Research School CNWS, School of Asian, African, and Amerindian Studies. Leiden, The Netherlands 1998.
System of romanization

The official romanization (1997) is as follows\(^\text{19}\).

1  \(\text{ṣ} \) ka  \(\text{ṣ} \) tā  \(\text{ṣ} \) tsa  \(\text{ṣ} \) ra\(^\text{C}\)
2  \(\text{ṛ} \) kha  \(\text{ṛ} \) tha  \(\text{ṛ} \) tsha  \(\text{ṛ} \) la
3  \(\text{ḍ} \) ga  \(\text{ḍ} \) da  \(\text{ḍ} \) dza  \(\text{ḍ} \) sha
4  \(\text{ṇ} \) nga  \(\text{ṇ} \) na  \(\text{ṇ} \) wa\(^\text{A}\)  \(\text{ṇ} \) sa
5  \(\text{ḍ} \) cha  \(\text{ḍ} \) pa  \(\text{ḍ} \) zha  \(\text{ḍ} \) ha
6  \(\text{ḍ} \) chha  \(\text{ḍ} \) pha  \(\text{ḍ} \) za  \(\text{ḍ} \) a
7  \(\text{ṛ} \) ja  \(\text{ṛ} \) ba, wa  \(\text{ṛ} \) a
8  \(\text{ṛ} \) nya  \(\text{ṛ} \) ma  \(\text{ṛ} \) ya\(^\text{B}\)

\(^\text{A}\) Subscript variant of the character \(\text{ṛ}\) is not romanized: \(\text{ṛ} \) ka, \(\text{ṛ} \) da, \(\text{ṛ} \) tsha.

\(^\text{B}\) Subscript variant of the character is \(\text{ṛ}\), e.g. \(\text{ṛ} \); for romanizations see Table II.

\(^\text{C}\) Superscript variant of the character \(\text{ṛ}\) is not romanized: \(\text{ṛ} \) ka, \(\text{ṛ} \) da, \(\text{ṛ} \) dza. Subscript variant of the character is \(\text{ṛ}\), e.g. \(\text{ṛ} \); for romanizations see Table II.

II. Syllable-initial consonant combinations

The list is not complete. Mainly those romanized differently from general rules are given. See also notes to the main table and note 1 at the end.

1  \(\text{ṛ} \) cha, ka\(^\text{A}\)  \(\text{ṛ} \) ya  \(\text{ṛ} \) thra  \(\text{ṛ} \) sa
2  \(\text{ṛ} \) chha, kha\(^\text{A}\)  \(\text{ṛ} \) nya  \(\text{ṛ} \) dra  \(\text{ṛ} \) hra
3  \(\text{ṛ} \) ja, gya\(^\text{A}\)  \(\text{ṛ} \) tra  \(\text{ṛ} \) tra  \(\text{ṛ} \) wa\(^\text{B}\)
4  \(\text{ṛ} \) cha, pcha  \(\text{ṛ} \) thra  \(\text{ṛ} \) thra  \(\text{ṛ} \) da
5  \(\text{ṛ} \) chha, pchha  \(\text{ṛ} \) dra  \(\text{ṛ} \) dra  \(\text{ṛ} \) lha
6  \(\text{ṛ} \) ja, bja  \(\text{ṛ} \) tra  \(\text{ṛ} \) shra

\(^\text{A}\) Palatal variants \(\text{ch}, \text{chh}, \text{j}\) are generally used before \(\text{a}, \text{o}\) and \(\text{u}\).

\(^\text{B}\) Not romanized if followed by any other vowel than \(\text{a}\).

\(^{19}\) Adapted from Samples for Geographical names of Bhutan in dzongkha and roman dzongkha with brief Guidelines. Dzongkha Development Commission, Royal Government of Bhutan, June 1997.
III. Vowel characters ( • stands for any consonant character)

1 • a, e/ay
2 • i
3 • u, ue/u
4 • e
5 • o, oe/o

A Romanized e or ay if followed by a suffix .byte ' • a

B Romanized ue or u if followed by a suffix .byte ' • a

C Romanized oe or o if followed by a suffix .byte ' • a

IV. Syllable endings (suffixes)

1 ག, མ,  མ or not romanized
2 མ,  མ, or not romanized
3 མ,  མ, not romanized, except thed
4 མ,  མ, or not romanized
5 མ,  མ, or not romanized

Notes

1. Dzongkha words are divided into syllables, separated by a special symbol, e.g. བིམ་ Thimphu.

A graphical syllable may be composed of several elements, including prefixed, superscript and subscript consonant characters that are used syllable-initially, and suffixed consonant characters (one or more) used syllable-finally. This may result in consonants being stacked up on top of the other, e.g. ཆ (transliterated sphy). As a rule, prefixed consonants are not romanized: དུང་ Dungna, དུ་ Gasa. Superscript consonants are not romanized, with the exception of བ  མ lha: དེང་ཐུབ་ Nangkor, སངས་པས་ Tangsibji. Suffixed consonants are romanized or not romanized based on local pronunciation, e.g. དྲུང་ཁ ཁ Drungkhas (subdivision), དངྱུག་ ཁ Wangchhuk (personal name), དཀྲ་ Ta (tiger), etc. Secondary suffixed consonants are not romanized, although there are some exceptions: བར་མཐུམ་ Bartsham, འབར་ཐུམ་ Dangchhu, but ངོ་དུང་ཐུབ་ གུ་ Zhemgang.

2. Additional characters that are found mainly in words of Indic provenance, are romanized as follows: ས tra, ཐ thra, བ dra, བ na, བ kha, བ chha.

3. Pronunciation of Dzongkha names may vary according to local usage and there are several exceptions to the present romanization guidelines.
Korean

No romanization system for Korean has been approved at the United Nations conferences on the standardization of geographical names, although systems for the romanization of Korean have been presented at several sessions of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN). Experts at the sessions have repeatedly expressed their wish that the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea should continue their efforts in aspiring to agree on a single international system for the romanization of Korean geographical names.

In the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea there is a national system adopted in 1992 and presented to the 17th session of UNGEGN in 1994, updated version was published in 2002²⁰.

In the Republic of Korea the Ministry of Culture and Tourism adopted in July 2000 a new system of romanization for Korean²¹ which superseded another system approved in 1984. It is provided that the full transition to the new system will be completed before the end of 2005 but it is already compulsory since March 2002 to follow this system in new publications.

Apart from the national systems the most widely used international system is that of McCune-Reischauer (1939) which has also been adopted by the BGN and the PCGN²².

A transliteration system that was provisionally agreed upon by the ISO experts of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea, is given in ISO TR 11941:1996 (a provisional technical report, not enforced as a standard)²³.

In linguistics also the so-called Yale system of romanization is widely accepted²⁴.

Korean uses an alphabetic script in which the characters are grouped graphically together into complex syllable blocks. So, the geographical name P’anmunjom is written 봉담정, not 폰문정.

Systems of romanization

The following table gives a comparison of all the main romanization systems. The character


²³ The summary of it was published at the Internet site http://www.phon.ucl.ac.uk/home/kskim/11941.html.

sequence has been taken from ISO TR 11941, there are variations to this in national usage. Romanization equivalents in the columns are as follows: 1 – ISO TR 11941, 2 – national system of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (1992), 3 – national system of the Republic of Korea (2000), 4 – McCune-Reischauer system (1939), 5 – Yale system of romanization.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>k/g</td>
<td>g, k&lt;sup&gt;f&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>null</em></td>
<td>kh/k</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>k’</td>
<td>kh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>null</em></td>
<td>kk/gg</td>
<td>kk</td>
<td>kk</td>
<td>kk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>t/d</td>
<td>t, t&lt;sup&gt;f&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>th/t</td>
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<td>t’</td>
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A See notes 2, 3 and 4.
B Word-initially.
C At the end of a syllable.
D At the beginning of a syllable.
E 0 is not romanized syllable-initially, syllable-finally it is romanized ng.
F The first romanization equivalent is used when occurring before a vowel, the second equivalent is used when followed by another consonant or if it forms the final sound of a word.
G 2 is romanized as r when followed by a vowel, and as l when followed by a consonant or when appearing at the end of a word. 22 is romanized as ll.

Notes to ISO TR 11941: 1996
1. Where there are pairs of romanizations, the first corresponds to Method I and the second to Method II.
2. To avoid ambiguity the apostrophe is used to denote the beginning of the next syllable in a polysyllabic word.
3. By Method I the apostrophe is needed in the following cases:
   a. if the consonant 0 is at the initial position of a non-initial syllable of a polysyllabic word: 꼼이 kkoch‘i, 꼼에 kang‘e, 음악하다 anc‘ara;
   b. if the five double consonants appear at the initial positions of the non-initial syllables of polysyllabic words: 약속 a‘kka, 합리적 hyin‘teok;
   c. if the four aspirated consonants appear at the initial position of the non-initial syllables of polysyllabic words: 요약하다 yu‘khwaehata;
4. By Method II the apostrophe is needed in the following cases:
   a. if the consonant 0 is at the initial position of a non-initial syllable of a polysyllabic word: 꼼이 ggoc‘i, 꼼에 gang‘e, 음악하다 anj‘ara;
   b. if the five double consonants appear at the initial positions of the non-initial syllables of polysyllabic words: 약속 a‘gga, 합리적 hyin‘ddeoog.

There are complicated rules based on pronunciation that determine the conversion of Korean syllables into Roman and the romanizations given in the table reflect only the most typical values. Most changes concern consonants which are often assimilated when used in combinations. The rules are given differently in various romanization systems and for reasons of economy these are not reproduced in this report.