

LLTI Highlights

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Introduction

Welcome to "LLTI Highlights"! The column this month is again being guest written by Barbara Need and Michael Berger, two of the managers of the Language Laboratories and Archives of the University of Chicago. As usual, the column features summaries of selected discussions which have taken place in LLTI—the Language Learning and Technology International listserv. This electronic forum is used by language lab professionals and others to discuss issues relevant to their everyday work. For information on how to subscribe to LLTI, see the end of this column.

The discussions summarized here have been either paraphrased or quoted; any omissions, errors or misinterpretations are ours. For each topic, the number in parentheses which follows was assigned by Otmar Foelsche, LLTI's moderator. This number can be used to facilitate a search of that topic in the LLTI archive, which can be a valuable research tool. For information on searching, see the section "The LLTI Archive" below.

Since our last column, there have been a number of different requests and discussions on LLTI related to the fact that we are part of a multilingual community. Unfortunately, space considerations did not allow us to address all of these requests and discussions. (See threads #4654, #4672, #4683, #4684, #4697, #4721, #4802, #4833, #4835, #4837, #4846, #4851, #4866, #4955, #5000, #5046, #5070, #5073, and #5088, among others!) Here we summarize threads dealing with viewing non-Roman scripts on the Web, and sending and receiving email in non-Roman scripts (some of this advice is also relevant to word processing in these scripts); in addition, issues related to multistandard VCRs and converters are discussed.

Free Japanese Fonts ? (#4810) January 1999

One Web related question was posed by Olaf Bohlke, who was looking for software which allowed Web browsing in Japanese on a Windows 95 machine. He had found that *KanjiWord*, which "works fine for typing Japanese" did not permit a user to view Japanese Web pages, even with Japanese encoding

enabled. He also wondered if there were any "public domain Japanese fonts for Windows 95". Robert Smitheram suggested installing "the international version of *Internet Explorer*", which can be gotten from Microsoft for free, since it "comes with fonts and an input method". Olaf followed up with some advice he received off-list from Kimi Furuta, who also mentions the free Japanese language support from Microsoft and adds that *Global IME* for Japanese (which can be downloaded from www.microsoft.com/windows/ie/download/all.htm?bShowPage) allows the user to "type Japanese character directly into email (*Outlook Express* or *Outlook 98* only) and web forms." In addition, fonts downloaded for (and by) *Internet Explorer* can be used by *Netscape*.

**Web Browsers
and Languages
(#4900)
Asian Languages
on Browsers
(#4927) March
1999**

Alex Kubicek (#4900) found that it was not enough to simply install the *Japanese Language Kit* or the *Chinese Language Kit* to enable users to browse in these languages. Otmar Foelsche pointed out that the programs used with the kits do not need to be localized (i.e., "software that interacts with the user in the appropriate languages within the application"), only "language kit compatible." He also reminded us that David Herren had addressed this issue and points out, as does Atsushi Fukada in a separate message, that the Multilingual Internet Access available on the MacOS 8.5. install disk allows browsing in Chinese and Japanese, though the language kits are needed for inputting text. He notes (as I have learned the hard way) that for Russian, Arabic (and Hebrew and Indic), inputting can be done with the multilingual *Internet Access*, though browsing cannot! (What a misnomer!) Wendy Baker Davis suggests going to the Apple site for information about which programs are worldscript compatible (and mentions *Eudora-J* as a way to send Japanese email. Edmund Saley recommends *TwinBridge* for non-Roman Web browsing and text input, though Daniel Tom points out for the benefit of Azaharee Abdullah that this software is for Windows, not Mac (as with the Apple language kits, a different set of software is needed for each language you wish to read or write). In a separately numbered thread, Eugene Chan also recommends getting the free font downloads for *Internet Explorer* for "several Asian languages," but he isn't sure about whether or not they allow you to input text.

**Greek Fonts for
the Web (#4959)
April 1999**

Roberta Russell reported a different problem: she has a faculty member who wants to read Greek (!) on the Web. Since there is no *Greek Language Kit*, she wonders where to find a font that will "work with Web-based text in modern Greek on a

Mac". Amy L. Wordelman suggested the Web page "How to Read, Write, Print and Email in Greek" (<http://www.hri.org/fonts/>); Margo Burns also recommended www.hri.org, taking it down one folder to [/fonts/mac/](http://www.hri.org/fonts/mac/); Karima Benremouga suggested looking at http://eee.uci.edu/~papyri/Athenian_Font.html for Ancient Greek fonts; and finally Naeem N. Sheikh suggested looking at <http://www.nyu.edu/acf/multilingual/> for links about multilingual computing issues.

Korean E-mail (#4801) January 1999

Related to Web browsing in non-Roman writing systems is sending and receiving email in them. Mary Ball (#4801) asked if anyone could recommend a Windows program for sending email in Korean. Gyonggu Shin composes and reads his Korean email in a Korean word processing program. Laurel Mittenthal suggests *Netscape Messenger* (which comes with *Navigator* as *Communicator*). One can set the encoding both for viewing and composing mail; however, she notes that you would "still need some sort of software to enter hangul", but adds that, given that software, this can be used on both PCs and Macs. She provides instructions at http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~mittenth/nrl_email.html and http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~mittenth/nrl_email.pdf. Pat Miller recommends *Asian Suite* (to be found at <http://www.unionway.com>) and Andrew Burrell and Patrick Davis independently suggest *NJStar Communicator* (go to www.njstar.com for a demo version), though Andrew only mentions its usefulness with Japanese. Patrick notes that his students like it because it does work with Japanese and Chinese, as well as Korean, but says it is only good for reading. Kimi Furuta suggests *Outlook Express* with *Global IME*, which works for Japanese and probably works fine for Korean (see above for more information about *Global IME*).

Free Web-mail Sites for Chinese and Korean (#4914) Using OperaMail to send Chinese (#4938) March 1999

Kimi Furuta asked if there were any "free Web-mail sites that support Chinese and/or Korean characters." Christian Ratcliff mentions **Hotmail.com**, which has "updated itself, and now supports just about any language you could care to use." As usual, you need fonts and input methods (language kits for Macs, *TwinBridge* or the like for PCs). Pat Miller suggests looking at the Unionway site on the web, the source for the *AsianSuite*. Kimi has used **Hotmail.com** to send and receive Asian characters; however, certain problems have been seen for Japanese (which are probably relevant to Chinese and Korean as well). The encoding must be set properly (and auto-select doesn't work!) and sometimes, no matter what the en-

coding, messages sent via **Hotmail.com** are unreadable. She expressed some concern that this would also be a problem for Chinese and Korean. Claire Bartlett agrees that *hotmail* works with Chinese (on both platforms) and has tried *Excite* with Chinese and Russian, without success. Ed Dixon supports the combination of the IMEs and *Outlook Express*. Finally, in a separate thread, Laurel Mittenthal let the list know that *OperaMail* (with *TwinBridge* and *NJCommunicator*) supports Chinese, Japanese and Korean email, but does not work with Russian.

Seeking Multistandard VCR for French SECAM (#4681) November 1998

David Kanig asked "What is the multistandard VCR of choice these days? We need one to play French SECAM. Also, will the recommended unit require a tri-standard TV/monitor? The old Phillips would only show French SECAM in color on a tri-standard monitor." David's question reflects a problem that many of us have faced since the disappearance of the legendary Panasonic AGW-1 and industrial multistandard video equipment from vendors' inventories.

Donald Wagner responded to David's plea with a mixed list of consumer and industrial VCR/converters and monitors recently purchased by his department, including an Aiwa HV-MXI Multi-Digital Converter for \$646, a Samsung SV-4000W Combination for \$1,625, and a SONY PVM20N5U Presentation Monitor for \$999. Don then added that "the AIWA & Samsung both are PAL & SECAM compliant. We use Aiwa for playing, and the Samsung for converting from PAL/SECAM to NTSC. The monitor uses RCA/BNC and S-Video connections, and is SECAM/PAL compliant."

Corroboration of Don's choice of the Aiwa VCR/converters came from Eduardo Lage Otero. Eduardo described how he "recently purchased several AIWA MX100 units" and has "had no problems with them. They play NTSC, PAL, and SECAM with a regular NTSC monitor. They are also converters so you should be able to record back to PAL or SECAM should you want to. They sell for around \$700.00." He adds the URL for the AIWA VCR (http://www.aiwa.com/catalog98/av/av_hvmx100_body3.html).

Focusing in on the SECAM issue that David raised, Bruce Duncan-Smith noted that if a multistandard VCR is used, a multistandard monitor is also necessary. This is not the case with a multistandard converter, with which a regular American TV monitor (i.e., NTSC monitor) can be used. This, by the way, is one way in which departments can save money—industrial NTSC TV monitors cost much less than industrial multistandard monitors. Bruce added the interesting bit of information that "most French film companies also ship in PAL,

the more common European standard".

A few days later, an ominous message from Jorg Waltje was posted to the list. Jorg warned that his Aiwa VCR (MX-100 ?) played SECAM, but the displayed image was black and white. [The Language Laboratories and Archives (LLA) at the University of Chicago has one Aiwa MX-100 and has never experienced this problem.]

Standard Converters (#4921) March 1999

About three months later the topic of multistandard VCR/converters again appeared on the LLTI list. Ed Dente, almost, it seems, in response to Jorg's 3 1/2 month old posting about his Aiwa VCR not playing SECAM videotapes in color, stated: "I'm ... very impressed by the STATED specs on the AIWA HV-MX100 standards converter. I am assured by the sales people that it does all conversions in color, and costs only \$799 [Ed corrected this to \$711 in a later posting]. I can't see any drawbacks when I compare it to the late, lamented AGW1. Anyone had any experience w/ this model?"

Derek Roff responded to Ed's posted price for the Aiwa HV-MX100. He describes how he "wandered Market Street in San Francisco, ... and found nothing to compete with the Aiwa HV-MX100." He was quoted prices of \$649 and \$500, but the vendors required cash. And he encountered a problem, which is not unusual in the electronics shops in the ethnic areas of big cities; "half a dozen stores were willing to match the \$649 price, but half of them didn't want to ship or deal with a university check. None would accept purchase orders." He only found a couple of vendors willing to accept a university check and ship the purchased item: World of Stereo II (415/626-1195) and Digital Photo Electronic (415/928-6263). But Derek added that because "these are small store front operations, ... I am hesitant to deal with them from a 1000 miles away. [And] with a shipping charge quoted at \$30, there is little savings over the price that Ed quotes. So, if he has found a reliable dealer that is ready to work with standard university procedures, I think that is a good way to go."

In a later posting, Ed mentioned the name of Hunt Photo and Video, a Boston-area dealer of A-V equipment that delivers and honors warranties, as the company that offered him the \$711 price on the Aiwa HV-MX100. Speaking of other reliable dealers who will take university purchase orders, try J & R Music World, 15 Park Row, New York, NY 10038 (Voice: 800-221-3191, FAX: 212-238-9175). In December, 1998, the LLA purchased an Aiwa HV-MX100 from J & R Music World for \$663.50 (including shipping).

Carmen Chavez was told by a salesperson at J & R that

“One item of news that has caused a great stir among users of the old Panasonic AGW-1 is the recent appearance of the AGW-2.”

Aiwa HV-MX100 multistandard VCR/converter only played SECAM tapes in black & white. She explains that because of this information “we ended up having to pay \$1300 for the SAMSUNG (which plays SECAM, PAL, etc)”. She includes a URL for more information on the Samsung SV 4000 W (<http://samsungelectronics.com/vcr/index02.html>). Carmen asked: “Can anyone else confirm that the Aiwa HV-MX100 will play SECAM in color?” As I mentioned above, the Aiwa HV MX100 purchased by the LLA from J & R plays SECAM tapes in color. (After reading these postings I tested it again!)

Diane Rackowski clarified the confusion about displaying SECAM tapes in color on the Aiwa multistandard VCR/converter. She wrote: “Update! Aiwa makes a new model VCR HV-MX100. Plays SECAM in Color. Has hi-fi stereo sound. Costs about \$600 - \$800. Experience with the old AIWA has been good. Three years of service with no problems.”

Pia Cseri-Briones confirmed that Aiwa also made the MX-1 (this is the one that plays only PAL/NTSC in color and the others in B&W.) Thus, the earlier version of the Aiwa multistandard VCR/converter was unable to display SECAM signals in color, but the newer model, the HV MX100, has no such problems.

Most likely, Jim Pierret was describing the older Aiwa model, when he wrote: “The Aiwa is only a mono unit and only really does PAL - NTSC conversion. It will play SECAM, but only in black and white. The price makes it a good choice if you don’t mind mono and only want to convert PAL.” The Aiwa HV MX100 is a Hi-Fi Stereo unit and will convert PAL and SECAM into NTSC (and vice versa).

Betty Woerner asked about the availability of equipment for standards-conversion, similar to the defunct Panasonic AGW-1. She queried: “is there another machine that does the same things? Is it as reliable as the Panasonic? How about cost?” To which Marianne Crusius responded: “according to (Wholesaleproducts.com) there is the AGW2 at a [good] price!” (See URL www.wholesaleproducts.com/panasonicconverters.html).

One item of news that has caused a great stir among users of the old Panasonic AGW-1 is the recent appearance of the AGW-2. Since several contributors referred to this new unit, I gathered some more information about it. According to John Delaney of Buyundercost.com, Inc. (see URL, buyundercost.com), the Panasonic AGW-2 is manufactured by Samsung, based on design specs by Panasonic. Samsung has a similar unit that it markets itself, the 4000W. To complicate matters, Samsung also supplies a similar unit to Go Video.

The AGW-2 costs about \$1,800, the Samsung 4000W costs about \$1,170, and the cost of the Go Video unit is about \$900. The AGW-2 has B & C connectors and possibly enhanced electronics, which may account for its higher price.

Russian VCR Format (#4928) March 1999

A new issue, somewhat similar to the standards questions discussed in the above postings, was raised by Debbie Sehlmeier when she asked if anyone knew the video standard used in Russia—PAL or SECAM.

Yana Cornish answered: "In Russia PAL is used." And though it seemed that Yana's definitive answer would end the discussion, Daniel Tom added a posting of his own, which complicated the issue. He wrote: "According to the Pan Am Sat Guide to World Television Standards chart ..., the VCR format used in Russia is SECAM not PAL. The following website also has a listing of formats by country and lists SECAM for Russia: <http://www.vxc.com/wwtvs.html>"

David D. Herren, supporting Daniel's comments, musingly added, "Hmm. I knew that they were moving increasingly to the use of PAL, but I was under the impression that they used some form of SECAM (differing slightly from the French broadcast version). At least that was the case in the early 90s when I was last there."

And Otmar Foelsche also added: "Oh politics..... the former Soviet Union went with a slightly modified SECAM standard as David Herren pointed out. Video Recordings today are almost always made on PAL machines. Many of the VCRs and TV sets in Russia are dual, sometimes even triple standard, but the favorite recording standard seems to be PAL (despite the awful flicker of the 25Hz screen!). I have not seen SECAM recordings coming out of Russia for quite a while (and we get quite a few...). I believe Russian television is still broadcasting in SECAM."

Another explanation was offered by Mike Ledgerwood. He described that "before the breakup of the Soviet Union, the main TV standard used was MESECAM, a variant of the French SECAM. This format still is used and is common. PAL is, indeed, replacing MESECAM since PAL machines are the European norm and market forces will tell. NTSC is sometimes seen, too, however. Cheaper multistandard VCRs that can convert signals are becoming common in Russia, too." Thus, TV standards in Russia are undergoing a turbulent transition, "like so much else in Russia."

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Barbara Need is the on-site manager for the Social Sciences site and Michael Berger is the on-site manager for the Language Faculty Resource Center site of the Language Labs and Archives at the University of Chicago.