UK Association for Accessible Formats UKAAF

Transcribing Foreign Language Material in UEB

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Introduction

The rules of UEB allow a range of approaches for transcribing foreign language text, enabling the resulting braille to be convenient to read for a variety of types of text, as well as for different groups of readers. (Full details are given in *Rules of Unified English Braille*, Sections 13 and 14.)

To simplify matters, in the UK we have decided to focus on and recommend three general methods which should be suitable to cover the majority of cases. This document will briefly explain each of these methods, and indicates the circumstances in which they are most appropriate to be used.

Method 1. Using standard UEB signs throughout

In this method, any foreign text, including accented letters and punctuation, etc. is transcribed using the standard UEB rules. In the UK, following the method used for SEB, we allow ordinary UEB contractions in foreign words or phrases, although care should be taken not to use contractions which would impede the recognition of words. Extended pieces of foreign text (e.g. a whole paragraph) are, however, often better left entirely uncontracted.

This method is appropriate for foreign words, phrases, names, titles, etc. occurring in the majority of books, magazines, leaflets and other material generally written in English, especially where it is not to be expected that readers will be familiar with the special foreign language signs as used in methods 2 and 3 below.

Examples:

I would like a *salade niçoise* and a *crème brûlée* please.

⠠⠊ ⠺⠙ ⠇ ⠁ ⠨⠂⠎⠁⠇⠁⠙⠑ ⠨⠂⠝⠊⠘⠯⠉⠕⠊⠎⠑ ⠯ ⠁
⠨⠂⠉⠗⠘⠡⠑⠍⠑ ⠨⠂⠃⠗⠘⠩⠥⠇⠘⠌⠑⠑ ⠏⠇⠂⠎⠑⠲

Thomas Mann: *Joseph in Egypt (Joseph in Ägypten)*, 1936

⠠⠹⠕⠍⠁⠎ ⠠⠍⠁⠝⠝⠒ ⠨⠶⠠⠚⠕⠎⠑⠏⠓ ⠔ ⠠⠑⠛⠽⠏⠞
⠐⠣⠠⠚⠕⠎⠑⠏⠓ ⠔ ⠠⠘⠒⠁⠛⠽⠏⠞⠢⠐⠜⠨⠄⠂ ⠼⠁⠊⠉⠋

Alain: Le Jardin suspendu for organ. Lubos Sluka: Via del silenzio. Eben: Mutationes for large and small organ. Kuchar: Menuet. Tomás Thon (organ).

⠠⠁⠇⠁⠔⠒ ⠠⠇⠑ ⠠⠚⠜⠙⠔ ⠎⠥⠎⠏⠢⠙⠥ ⠿
⠕⠗⠛⠁⠝⠲ ⠠⠇⠥⠃⠕⠎ ⠠⠎⠇⠥⠅⠁⠒ ⠠⠧⠊⠁ ⠙⠑⠇
⠎⠊⠇⠢⠵⠊⠕⠲ ⠠⠑⠃⠢⠒ ⠠⠍⠥⠞⠁⠰⠝⠑⠎ ⠿ ⠇⠜⠛⠑ ⠯
⠎⠍⠁⠇⠇
⠕⠗⠛⠁⠝⠲ ⠠⠅⠥⠡⠜⠒ ⠠⠍⠢⠥⠑⠞⠲ ⠠⠞⠕⠍⠘⠌⠁⠎ ⠠⠹
⠕⠝ ⠐⠣⠕⠗⠛⠁⠝⠐⠜⠲

Method 2. Using foreign language signs for accented letters

In this method, the foreign language signs for accented letters are used as needed in foreign text, though all other signs (e.g. punctuation, etc.) are in UEB. Neither foreign contractions nor UEB contractions are used in foreign words, though UEB contractions are used in surrounding English words.

In the normal use of this method, UEB code switch indicators are not inserted for the accented letters. For this to be viable the distinction between English and foreign text needs to be sufficiently clear from the context, e.g. by format or font change, so that the foreign accented letters are unlikely to be mistaken by the reader for UEB contractions (or other signs). In cases where it is considered that there is likely to be confusion, UEB code switch indicators can be used at that specific point; but this should be regarded as the exception when using this method.

The advantage of this method over method 1 is that the resulting foreign text is generally "smoother" and more natural to read, as it avoids the need for multi-cell accent indicators in the braille, which can be disruptive if frequent. Code switch indicators are also avoided, which can similarly be disruptive to the reader. This method can also provide a useful stepping stone to the type of braille used in the country in question.

This method is appropriate for the foreign text in foreign language school textbooks, foreign language school examination papers, foreign language grammar books and phrase books, bilingual dictionaries (e.g. English/French), etc.

However, where foreign language phrase books are expected to be used by casual users (e.g. for holidays abroad), then it may be more appropriate to use method 1 above, as it doesn’t require the reader to know (or to be informed of) special braille signs.

Examples:

[A French textbook question:]

6. Finish your postcard by writing
Amitiés (Best wishes)
or *à Bientôt* (see you soon)
or *Affectueusement* (love)
and sign your name

⠼⠋⠲ ⠠⠋⠔⠊⠩ ⠽⠗ ⠏⠕⠌⠉⠜⠙ ⠃⠽ ⠺⠗⠊⠞⠬
⠨⠂⠠⠁⠍⠊⠞⠊⠿⠎ ⠐⠣⠠⠃⠑⠌ ⠺⠊⠩⠑⠎⠐⠜
⠕⠗ ⠨⠂⠷ ⠨⠂⠠⠃⠊⠑⠝⠞⠹⠞ ⠐⠣⠎⠑⠑ ⠽
⠎⠕⠕⠝⠐⠜
⠕⠗ ⠨⠂⠠⠁⠋⠋⠑⠉⠞⠥⠑⠥⠎⠑⠍⠑⠝⠞ ⠐⠣⠇⠕⠧⠑⠐⠜
⠯ ⠎⠊⠛⠝ ⠽⠗ ⠐⠝

[A German bilingual dictionary extract. The pattern for entries will be established for the whole dictionary – it is clear that the entry word is German without indicators:]

länden *vt* (*dial*) *Leiche* to recover (*aus* from)
Landenge *f* isthmus

⠇⠜⠝⠙⠑⠝ ⠨⠂⠧⠞ ⠐⠣⠨⠂⠙⠊⠁⠇⠐⠜ ⠨⠂⠠⠇⠑⠊⠉⠓⠑
⠞⠕
⠗⠑⠉⠕⠧⠻ ⠐⠣⠨⠂⠁⠥⠎ ⠋⠐⠜
⠠⠇⠁⠝⠙⠑⠝⠛⠑ ⠨⠆⠰⠋ ⠊⠎⠹⠍⠥⠎

[An example advert from a French school textbook:]

** **STUDIO À LOUER**
Lyon, centre ville (75 rue de la République), 4e ét. chauffage individuel à gaz, coin cuisine, douche, meublé. Loyer mensuel €900 avec charges comprises. Tél. Delarue 888.73.25

⠐⠔⠐⠔ ⠘⠶⠠⠠⠠⠎⠞⠥⠙⠊⠕ ⠷ ⠇⠕⠥⠑⠗⠠⠄⠘⠄

⠠⠇⠽⠕⠝⠂ ⠉⠑⠝⠞⠗⠑ ⠧⠊⠇⠇⠑ ⠐⠣⠼⠛⠑ ⠗⠥⠑ ⠙⠑
⠇⠁ ⠠⠗⠿⠏⠤⠃⠇⠊⠟⠥⠑⠐⠜⠂ ⠼⠙⠰⠑ ⠿⠞⠲
⠉⠓⠁⠥⠋⠋⠁⠛⠑ ⠊⠝⠙⠊⠧⠊⠙⠥⠑⠇ ⠷ ⠛⠁⠵⠂ ⠉⠕⠊⠝
⠉⠥⠊⠎⠊⠝⠑⠂ ⠙⠕⠥⠉⠓⠑⠂ ⠍⠑⠥⠃⠇⠿⠲ ⠠⠇⠕⠽⠑⠗
⠍⠑⠝⠎⠥⠑⠇ ⠈⠑⠼⠊⠚⠚ ⠁⠧⠑⠉ ⠉⠓⠁⠗⠛⠑⠎
⠉⠕⠍⠏⠗⠊⠎⠑⠎⠲ ⠠⠞⠿⠇⠲ ⠠⠙⠑⠇⠁⠗⠥⠑
⠼⠓⠓⠓⠲⠛⠉⠲⠃⠑

Method 3. Using the full foreign language braille code

In this method the full braille code of the country in question is used. UEB code switch indicators (non-UEB indicators) should normally be used where foreign text is mixed with English text in UEB. However in some cases, where the use of foreign language code is clear, the code switch indicators can be dispensed with. If the foreign language braille code includes contractions (e.g. French or German), then there is an option either to use or not use such contractions, depending on the expected readership of the braille.

This method is appropriate for foreign language literature (i.e. entirely written in that language), where the readership is expected to be familiar with the foreign code. It may also be appropriate for other material for such readers, where the switching between English and foreign text is clear cut and doesn't require the frequent use of code switch indicators.

Examples:

[Part of a German tourist leaflet, in uncontracted German braille:]

* Neue Startzeit beim **Köln-Marathon**

Erstellt 03.02.2014

Die Marathonläufer beim Köln-Marathon 2014 haben einen kurzen Tag: statt wie bisher um 11:30 Uhr erfolgt der Startschuss über die 42,195 km bereits um 10 Uhr.

⠠⠔ ⠝⠑⠥⠑ ⠎⠞⠁⠗⠞⠵⠑⠊⠞ ⠃⠑⠊⠍ ⠸⠅⠪⠇⠝⠤
⠸⠍⠁⠗⠁⠞⠓⠕⠝

⠑⠗⠎⠞⠑⠇⠇⠞ ⠼⠚⠉⠄⠚⠃⠄⠃⠚⠁⠙

⠙⠊⠑ ⠍⠁⠗⠁⠞⠓⠕⠝⠇⠜⠥⠋⠑⠗ ⠃⠑⠊⠍ ⠅⠪⠇⠝⠤
⠍⠁⠗⠁⠞⠓⠕⠝ ⠼⠃⠚⠁⠙ ⠓⠁⠃⠑⠝ ⠑⠊⠝⠑⠝ ⠅⠥⠗⠵⠑⠝
⠞⠁⠛⠒ ⠎⠞⠁⠞⠞ ⠺⠊⠑ ⠃⠊⠎⠓⠑⠗ ⠥⠍ ⠼⠁⠁⠒⠼⠉⠚
⠥⠓⠗ ⠑⠗⠋⠕⠇⠛⠞ ⠙⠑⠗ ⠎⠞⠁⠗⠞⠎⠉⠓⠥⠎⠎ ⠳⠃⠑⠗
⠙⠊⠑ ⠼⠙⠃⠂⠁⠊⠑ ⠠⠅⠍ ⠃⠑⠗⠑⠊⠞⠎ ⠥⠍ ⠼⠁⠚ ⠥⠓⠗⠄

[From the beginning of Don Quixote, transcribed to contracted Spanish braille:]

Y era la verdad que por él caminaba. Y añadió diciendo:

- Dichosa edad, y siglo dichoso aquel adonde saldrán a luz las famosas hazañas mías, dignas de entallarse en bronces, esculpirse en mármoles y pintarse en tablas para memoria en lo futuro. ¡Oh tú, sabio encantador, quienquiera que seas, a quien ha de tocar el ser coronista desta peregrina historia, ruégote que no te olvides de mi buen Rocinante, compañero eterno mío en todos mis caminos y carreras!

⠨⠽ ⠑⠗⠁ ⠄ ⠧⠑⠗⠙⠹ ⠟ ⠏ ⠮
⠉⠁⠍⠊⠝⠁⠃⠁⠄ ⠨⠽ ⠁⠻⠁⠙⠊⠬ ⠙⠊⠉⠊⠑⠝⠙⠕⠒

⠤⠤ ⠨⠙⠊⠉⠓⠕⠎⠁ ⠑⠙⠹⠂ ⠽ ⠎⠊⠛⠇⠕ ⠙⠊⠉⠓⠕⠎⠕
⠬ ⠁⠙⠕⠝⠙⠑ ⠎⠁⠇⠙⠗⠷⠝ ⠁ ⠇⠥⠵ ⠯ ⠋⠁⠍⠕⠎⠯
⠓⠁⠵⠁⠻⠯ ⠍⠌⠯⠂ ⠙⠊⠛⠝⠯ ⠙ ⠑⠝⠞⠁⠇⠇⠁⠗⠎⠑ ⠑⠝
⠃⠗⠕⠝⠉⠫⠂ ⠑⠎⠉⠥⠇⠏⠊⠗⠎⠑ ⠑⠝ ⠍⠷⠗⠍⠕⠇⠫ ⠽
⠏⠊⠝⠞⠁⠗⠎⠑ ⠑⠝ ⠞⠁⠃⠇⠯ ⠏⠁⠗⠁ ⠍⠑⠍⠕⠗⠊⠁ ⠑⠝
⠤ ⠋⠥⠞⠥⠗⠕⠄ ⠖⠨⠕⠓ ⠞⠾⠂ ⠎⠁⠃⠊⠕
⠑⠝⠉⠁⠝⠞⠁⠙⠕⠗⠂ ⠟⠥⠊⠑⠝⠟⠥⠊⠑⠗⠁ ⠟ ⠎⠑⠯⠂ ⠁
⠟⠥⠊⠑⠝ ⠓⠁ ⠙ ⠞⠕⠉⠁⠗ ⠑ ⠎⠑⠗ ⠉⠕⠗⠕⠝⠊⠎⠞⠁
⠙⠑⠎⠞⠁ ⠏⠑⠗⠑⠛⠗⠊⠝⠁ ⠓⠊⠎⠞⠕⠗⠊⠁⠂ ⠗⠥⠮⠛⠕⠞⠑
⠟ ⠝ ⠞ ⠕⠇⠧⠊⠙⠫ ⠙ ⠍⠊ ⠃⠥⠑⠝ ⠨⠗⠕⠉⠊⠝⠁⠝⠞⠑⠂
⠉⠕⠍⠏⠁⠻⠑⠗⠕ ⠑⠞⠑⠗⠝⠕ ⠍⠌⠕ ⠑⠝ ⠞⠕⠙⠪ ⠍⠊⠎
⠉⠁⠍⠊⠝⠪ ⠽ ⠉⠁⠗⠗⠑⠗⠯⠖

Languages in non-Roman Scripts

Languages in non-Roman scripts such as Greek or Russian may be treated by either methods 2 or 3. Note, however, that in this case the change to foreign text may not be accompanied by other font changes (e.g. to italics or bold) as is often used to distinguish foreign language text in Roman script, so the use of code switch indicators will probably be more often required. Also note that as a general rule UEB signs may not be used within the scope of code switch indicators (either passage or word indicators). Thus if it is intended that UEB specific signs are to be used in conjunction with non-Roman script, care should be taken that they lie outside the scope of any code switch indicators used.

Example:

[Greek script enclosed in non-UEB passage indicators.]

E.g. ἐλεγε κακον τι, 'he was saying something bad.'
But τι κακον ἐλεγε; 'what bad (thing) was he saying?'

⠠⠑⠲⠛⠲ ⠐⠷⠄⠴⠑⠇⠑⠛⠑ ⠅⠁⠅⠕⠝ ⠞⠊⠠⠐⠾⠂ ⠦⠓⠑ ⠴ ⠎⠁⠽⠬ ⠐⠎⠹⠬ ⠃⠁⠙⠲⠴

⠠⠃ ⠐⠷⠄⠞⠊ ⠅⠁⠅⠕⠝ ⠴⠑⠇⠑⠛⠑⠆⠠⠐⠾ ⠦⠱⠁⠞ ⠃⠁⠙ ⠐⠣⠹⠬⠐⠜ ⠴ ⠓⠑ ⠎⠁⠽⠬⠦⠴

Latin

This is satisfactorily and easily treated by transcribing in grade 1. Pronunciation marks are brailled using the standard UEB signs. No code switch indicators are needed.

Example:

[In this example the long accent sign is used.]

rēx dīxit Rōmānōs exercitum parāvisse; mox prīmōs mīlitēs adventūrōs esse.

The king said that the Romans had prepared an army; (he said that) the first soldiers would soon arrive.

⠗⠈⠤⠑⠭ ⠙⠈⠤⠊⠭⠊⠞ ⠠⠗⠈⠤⠕⠍⠈⠤⠁⠝⠈⠤⠕⠎
⠑⠭⠑⠗⠉⠊⠞⠥⠍ ⠏⠁⠗⠈⠤⠁⠧⠊⠎⠎⠑⠆ ⠍⠕⠭
⠏⠗⠈⠤⠊⠍⠈⠤⠕⠎ ⠍⠈⠤⠊⠇⠊⠞⠈⠤⠑⠎
⠁⠙⠧⠑⠝⠞⠈⠤⠥⠗⠈⠤⠕⠎ ⠑⠎⠎⠑⠲

⠠⠮ ⠅⠬ ⠎⠙ ⠞ ⠮ ⠠⠗⠕⠍⠁⠝⠎ ⠸⠓ ⠏⠗⠑⠏⠜⠫
⠁⠝ ⠜⠍⠽⠆ ⠐⠣⠓⠑ ⠎⠙ ⠞⠐⠜ ⠮ ⠋⠌ ⠎⠕⠇⠙⠊⠻⠎
⠺⠙ ⠎⠕⠕⠝ ⠜⠗⠊⠧⠑⠲

Old English

This is covered in the *Rules of Unified English Braille*, Section 12. In brief: old English letters (e.g. thorn þ and eth ð) are included as signs within UEB, and code switching is not used.

Welsh

Although of course not a "foreign" language in the UK, as far as UEB is concerned Welsh is a non-English code and so the above methods, 1, 2 and 3 apply. For many purposes, method 3 – using the full Welsh braille code, will be the most appropriate, e.g. for Welsh-English bilingual documents. On the other hand, method 1 may be used for occasional Welsh words or phrases within otherwise English UEB text.

Standard Usage for Educational Materials

Note that the guidance given in this document is not intended to exclude other valid approaches where needed, as explained in the *Rules of Unified English Braille*, Sections 13 and 14. However it is meant to instigate a degree of commonality of approach for the majority of cases, so that readers have a familiarity and confidence in the style of the braille that they read.

This is especially important for educational materials, so a standard for published materials for that sector should be regarded as being set by the guidelines given in this document. Thus, in summary, for published educational materials:

- **Method 1** should be used for foreign words, phrases, names, titles, etc. occurring in the majority of books, examination papers and other material generally written in English.

- **Method 2** should generally be used for the foreign text in foreign language school textbooks, foreign language school examination papers, foreign language grammar books and phrase books, bilingual dictionaries (e.g. English/French), etc.

- The specific guidance e.g. on **Languages in non-Roman Scripts**, **Latin** and **Welsh** should be followed in those cases.

Reference for Foreign Language Braille Codes

For information on foreign language braille codes refer to World Braille Usage, Third Edition, available for download from the web site of the Perkins School for the Blind: www.perkins.org/worldbrailleusage. This lists accented letter signs for various languages as used in Method 2, as well as braille signs for non-Roman scripts, such as Greek and Russian. It also includes some common punctuation marks as used in Method 3, though reference would usually need to be made to the full foreign language braille code as produced by the country concerned for full information as needed for Method 3.

For convenience an appendix follows which lists accented letters for French, German, Italian and Spanish.

Appendix

Some Foreign Language Accented Letters as used with Method 2

A. French

⠯	ç	⠡	â	⠫	ë
⠿	é	⠣	ê	⠻	ï
⠷	à	⠩	î	⠳	ü
⠮	è	⠹	ô	⠪	œ
⠾	ù	⠱	û		

B. German

⠮	ß	⠪	ö
⠳	ü	⠜	ä

C. Italian

(Note: This list, based on that given in World Braille Usage, includes accented letters which would only occur in foreign words in an Italian context.)

⠯	ç	⠣	ê	⠪	ö
⠿	é	⠩	î	⠳	ü
⠷	à	⠹	ô	⠬	ò
⠮	è	⠱	û	⠌	ì
⠾	ù	⠫	ë		
⠡	â	⠻	ï		

D. Spanish

⠷	á	⠻	ñ	⠬	ó
⠮	é	⠳	ü		
⠾	ú	⠌	í		

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