Native Language Transliterations in English Wikipedia articles

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What is a transliteration in this context?

- Articles with strong non-English connections usually carry a transliteration, usually in the language of origin

Where is it found?

- In most foreign (non-English) related articles
- Used extensively in Russian and Indian articles having strong native connections

Why is it a problem?

- Sometimes it is clearly disruptive, and takes attention away from the primary topic at hand

Genghis Khan (English pronunciation:◀) /ˈɡɛŋɡɪs ˈkɑːn/ or /ˈdʒɛŋɡɪs ˈkɑːn/;[1][2]; Cyrillic: Чингис Хаан, *Chingis Khaan*, IPA: [tʃiŋɡɪs xaːŋ] (◀ listen); Mongol script: , *Činggis Qayan*; Chinese: 成吉思汗; traditional Chinese: 成吉思汗; pinyin: *Chéng Jí Sī Hán*; probably May 31, 1162[3] – August 25, 1227), born **Temujin** (English pronunciation: /təˈmuːdʒɪn/; Mongolian: Тэмужин, *Temüjin* IPA: [tʰemutʃiŋ] (◀ listen); Middle Mongolian: *Temüjin*;[4] traditional Chinese: 鐵木真; simplified Chinese: 铁木真; pinyin: *Tiě mù zhēn*) and also known by the temple name **Taizu** (Chinese: 元太祖; traditional Chinese: 元太祖; pinyin: *Yuán Tàizǔ*; Wade–Giles: T'ai-Tsu), was the founder and Great Khan (emperor) of the Mongol Empire, which became the largest contiguous empire in history after his death.

Why is it a problem? (contd..)

- Frequent edit wars take place, resulting in unpleasant situations for editors, and wastage of time for well meaning editors

- Inexperienced but otherwise well meaning editors usually face these problems, hence reducing contributor confidence in the process

Why do disputes occur?

- Geographical location (of a place)
- Name of the subject (of a place, a person)
- Ethnicity, origin, place of birth (of a person)
- Present location (of a person)
- Field of repute (of a person)

- Editors may feel need for inclusion of their language in the article, because the subject has a connection (some of them mentioned above) to their native language

Why do disputes occur? (contd..)

- It is usually triggered by an existing transliteration on the page

The need

- Ideally, it should only be to aid pronunciation
- It has now become a practice to include a transliteration for all Indian articles, sometimes just to show an "Indian connection"
- However, there is no clear governing policy currently in force

Cases

Deepika Padukone

A *start-class* article from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Deepika Padukone (Hindi: दीपिका पडुकोण [diːpɪka: ˈpəɖʊkoːɳ]; born 5 January 1986) is an Indian actress and a former model. She appears mostly in Hindi as well as Tamil and Kannada language films. Born to Badminton player Prakash Padukone, she chose to become an actress and not pursue a career in sports.[1]

Padukone made her acting debut in the 2006 Kannada film *Aishwarya*. The following year, she made her Hindi film debut in the blockbuster *Om Shanti Om* opposite Shah Rukh Khan, which earned her the Filmfare Best Female Debut Award. It also remains her biggest commercial success so far. She subsequently appeared in films such as *Love Aaj Kal* (2009) and *Housefull* (2010). While the former earned her a Filmfare nomination in the Best Actress category, the latter emerged as a commercial success.[2]

- Konkani
- Hindi
- Kannada

Deepika Padukone

- Brought up in Bangalore, origins in Konkan area
- Found fame in Hindi movies
- Kannada transliteration removed and Hindi added after discussion
- Confusion exists about the pronunciation of the name

Rajinikanth

- Tamil
- Kannada
- Marathi

Rajinikanth (contd..)

- A Bangalorean in his young days, part of Kannada theatre
- Origins in Maharashtra
- Famous for his Tamil movies

Early life
[edit]

Rajinikanth was born as Shivaji Rao Gaikwad (Marathi: शिवाजीराव गायकवाड) in a Maharashtrian family,[6] to mother Jijabai and father Ramoji Rao Gaekwad, on December 12, 1950 in the Indian city of Bangalore in Mysore State, present-day Karnataka.[1] He was the youngest of four siblings and has two brothers and a sister. After the death of his mother at his age of 5,[7] he struggled with an impoverished lifestyle during his childhood. During that time, he often did odd jobs as a coolie in his community. He attended the Government Model Primary School at Gavipuram, Bangalore where he had his elementary education in Kannada.[8]

Between 1966 and 1973 he worked in many places in Chennai and Bangalore. He performed various jobs before joining the then Bangalore Transport Service (BTS) as a bus conductor in Bangalore.[9][10] He began to take part in stage plays after Kannada playwright and director Topi Muniappa offered him a chance to act in mythological moral plays, out of which the most notable role performed by him

Rajinikanth (contd..)

- Frequent edit wars still take place, with editors trying to put Kannada transliterations and Marathi transliterations to the lead

Hosur

- Tamil
- Kannada
- Telugu

Hosur (contd..)

- Town in Tamil Nadu close to Bangalore and proximal to Andhra Pradesh

- Article was subjected to intense disruption by user who insisted on removal of scripts other than Tamil. User created sockpuppets and personally harassed editors. Article was fully protected for some time.

The way forward

- Make a policy/guideline
- When there are clear pronunciation differences between local name and English name
- Limit to parenthetical material

The way forward (contd..)

- Policy making might be difficult as each case is very different from the other
- Eliminate transliterations altogether, instead put IPA or audio help
- Of course, editors will have more time to devote to make more useful edits

Thank You