

Comments after my positive IAB appeal

My lonely fight

I pursue a lonely fight at the IETF towards a Multilingual Internet, as opposed to the Internationalised US Internet. The IETF current doctrine is mostly proposed and enabled by the Unicode leaders (<http://www.unicode.org/consortium/directors.html>) and Members. Being in synergy with ISO and WSIS developments, I obtained step by step all what I wanted.

For the first time I had appealed to the IAB. And I won.

One against everyone, I made many "friends". They wish to neutralize me before the launching on 6-8 March of a promotion campaign of their coordinated project. It is certainly able to give them control of language and text industries (<http://www.unicodeconference.org/press-release-e.htm>) and the dominance of the future "brain business area", the key to the future economy. This means that my direct opponent is Harald Alvestrand (Cisco), last IETF Chair, Unicode BoD Member, author of the RFCs on language support, accepted "owner" of the mailing list discussing (blocking) the entries in the IANA registry (ietf-languages@alvestrand.no).

Their vision

Their vision is simple. A unique IANA registry references their languages tagging system. In controlling this registry they organise a de facto commercial exclusive. In cross referencing this solution throughout ISO standards, W3C propositions, RFCs, their own Windows and Linux locale files, possibly lingual TLDs, they install their "globalization" continuity everywhere. "Globalization" aims at removing barriers between English and other languages, as if technically integrating them into an "extended English".

This is achieved by:

- the "internationalization" of the environment (Internet) in using the Unicode list as a unique character set, and the langtags as the sole acknowledged language names (right now around 300 ones).
- and the "localization" of the non-English user interface, in using the Unicode [CLDR project] "locale" files named after the same langtags.

Its implications

Such a "globalization" would provide them a control of the whole digital ecosystem, and of the world, infinitely stronger than the DNS root file (of decreasing importance). This would be the threat of violent reactions against the "bleak" English speaking world it would create (Peace Nobel Prize, de Klerk). It would also be a development catastrophe: it is text and typography oriented. This would limit multimedia innovation. This could not support the emergence of the computer assisted language mode. This would still less take into account all the networking polylogue related phenomenons which extend our civilisations. This could not properly support the oral cultures emergence, new generations will dearly need as their own roots.

The Multilingualisation

Multilingualisation's purpose is to technically offer everyone the same linguistic capabilities and opportunities (<http://nicso.org/equilang.pdf>) whatever his language, the same as for English. Its target is to remove the barriers among every language (20.000 and more). It is to support their vernacular (local and common) use, empowerment, study, documentation, and teaching. It is to provide each language its programming, coding, R&D environment (script, architexts, etc.). Multilingualisation understands ISO 10646 (Unicode) as a list of reference (registry) to document each language/script character set. Open

Multilingualism is to be at the core of the open distributed registry architecture (DRS, distributed registries system) necessary to the NGN deployment and interoperations.

What did I appeal?

In my IAB appeal, I opposed my ban from the IANA list "owned" by Harald Alvestrand because I oppose this "ownership". I thought the IAB would confirm the position of its former fellow member and back the IETF internationalization doctrine (the reason for the Internationalized Domain Names Application difficulties). So, my request was formulated accordingly. Had they turned me wrong without comment, the IAB would have confirmed the IESG lack of opposition to my propositions. These propositions are to organise entities to share into the Internet standard process, to help with Multilingual Internet, users requirements and IGF interfacing and ethical areas.

IAB's non-reponse

In fact, the IAB turned me right, asking the IESG to review the status of the concerned list. It also said it did not discuss my questions, confirming the IESG "no comment". Further to the repeated lack of objection, I can now engage without conflict the development, the organisation and the deployment of the DRS outside of the IETF, while keeping it informed. We have here, within our reach, an architectural revolution the IAB tried in vain to engage (architecture-discuss) and the NSF delays (GENI). We can now work on it, protected from the "internationalization" dead-end, in line with the JTC1/SG32/W2 achievements and works, and benefiting from the E1.7 support of punycode which frees the universal naming system.

Next step

I have a running appeal to the IESG concerning the Unicode language tag Draft. This Draft permits easy cultural, racial, religious mass profiling (using search engines), privacy violations and multi-tier Internet. This makes serious non warned security breaches. This appeal proposes a way for them to be DRS compatible. Several other appeals will technically address the blocking attempts engaged by Harald Alvestrand (they are based on his decisions, now considered as illegitimate).

(The response of the IESG is negative, but confirms most of my points. I did not ask to correct them as it would mean to change their doctrine. I asked for them to warn the users. The response suggests that an information RFC could do the job. This is what I engage, using my appeal and their answer material).

The root issue

The technical, economical, political, cultural and societal stakes are such that I do not think that influence games will stop as simply. Dr. Lessig explained the "constitution is in the code", meaning in the standards. The Information Society Constitution is in the RFCs. It is good to discuss laws and rules at the WSIS, but we should also get involved together in their constitutional roots.

jfc