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H. Deng
Z. Cao
China Mobile
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How to Call Chinese People's Names
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Abstract

This document tries to give a brief introduction of how to call Chinese people's name in Chinese way. After reading this, you will find it quite easy to accomplish that.

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[1.](#) Background

There were only two participants from mainland China in the IETF 60th meeting at San Diego, while today there are more than 150 participants from mainland China each time. But it seems that there are still many difficulties for western people to correctly call Chinese people's names. This document is purposefully trying to make it easy for westerns. It mainly discusses about "Han" people in mainland of China, and doesn't include other 55 minority group who speak their own languages.

[2.](#) Way to call Chinese name in mainland

In China, when we call somebody's name, we usually put his/her Last name first, and first name last.

Most Last/Family names have only one Chinese character, and only a few consist of two characters.

For first names, both one-character names and two-character names are common.

So normally people names have two to three Chinese characters (Today even for). For those whose names have two characters, we normally speak out all the characters in their names. For those whose names have more than two characters, we normally speak out their first name only, which is similar to western way.

For example, Hui Deng, as an author of the draft, is a name of two characters, where we put his first name first "Hui", but when we call him, Chinese people usually call him Deng Hui (without titles in use,

when titles are used, refer to the next section).

Take 'Xiaodong Duan' as another example. This is a name of three characters (Xiaodong as the first name and Duan is the family name). So Chinese people would usually neglect its last name, and just call him by using his first names - Xiaodong.

People only call two characters probably because they prefer only two syllables other to three syllables, one chinese character normally has only one syllable.

Getting back, when people are not familiar with each other or introduce each other Chinese people will use full name to show their respectation whatever two, three or four characters

[3.](#) Titles in Use

Most chinese people are called by different names according to the relationship between each other. In other words, parents call their children by one name, his/her friends call him/her by something else, and colleagues have another name for him. These different names include titles (terms of respect), nicens, and so on. Humble attitude is an authentic tradition in chinese culture, the respectation by using special terms is always given to the people according to his/her occupation or status in society.

Nowadays, there are many commonly used titles. Two generic titles that have similar meanings to "Mr." and "Ms./Mrs." are "Xian1sheng1" and "Nv3Shi4". These two titles have been widely used either between peoples who are unfamiliar with each other, or during the formal situations like the conference.(1,2,3,4 in this section will be explained in next section)

Another two commonly used titles are "Jiao4shao4" and "Lao3shi1" which indicate that people is a professor or instructor. Suppose the surname of that professor or teacher is "Zhang", then you could him/her "Zhang Jiao4shou4" or "Zhang Lao3shi1". Other titles which also have been widely used are as follows: "Lao3ban3" stands for the boss

of the company, "Zhu3Xi2" stands for "chairman", "Zong" stands for "President of company", in most cases, you can add his surname in front of the title. Rare cases, add his/her given name in front of the title.

An unknown person such as taxi driver on the street can be called as "Shi1fu1". The term means "Master", and it may mean that he can help to bring you somewhere.

[4.](#) The 'Four Tones'

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This document has used four tones of Chinese (1: Even level; 2: Rising; 3: Departing; 4: Entering). We usually denoted using the alphanumeric. For example, Deng4 Hui1.

Mandarin uses four tones to clarify the meanings of words. Since many characters have the same sound, tones are used to differentiate words from each other. Similar to the different intonations in English language.

The tones sometimes are difficult to learn, as intonations and pitches in English to non-native speakers. Normally people who speak Latin can only pronounce the 'Even level', because there are no equivalent differentiation in those language as we had guessed.

[5.](#) Acknowledgement

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[6.](#) IANA Considerations

NO IANA Requests.

[7.](#) Security Considerations

N/A.

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Authors' Addresses

Hui Deng
China Mobile
Xuanwumenxi Ave. No.32
Beijing 100053
China

Email: denghui@chinamobile.com

Zhen Cao
China Mobile
Xuanwumenxi Ave. No.32
Beijing, Beijing 100053
China

Email: zehn.cao@gmail.com, caozhen@chinamobile.com

