ISO 639-3 Registration Authority

Request for New Language Code Element in ISO 639-3

This form is to be used in conjunction with a “Request for Change to ISO 639-3 Language Code” form

Date: 2007-9-21

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Names, affiliations and email addresses of additional supporters of this request:

Associated Change request number : 2007-188 (completed by Registration Authority)

Tentative assignment of new identifier : hnj (completed by Registration Authority)

PLEASE NOTE: This completed form will become part of the public record of this change request and the history of the ISO 639-3 code set. Use Shift-Enter to insert a new line in a form field (where allowed).

1. NAMES and IDENTIFICATION

a) Preferred name of language for code element denotation:
Hmong Njua

b) Autonym (self-name) for this language:
Hmong Njua (with alternate spellings Mong Ntsua, Hmong Nzhua); some speakers in Thailand, Laos and the USA also call themselves Hmong Lens (Hmoob Leeg)

c) Common alternate names and spellings of language, and any established abbreviations:
Hmong Njua, Mong Ntsua, Hmong Nzhua, Blue Hmong, Blue Meo, Tak Miao, Green Hmong, Green Meo, Qing Miao, Ching Miao, Lu Miao; Meo Dam or Meo Lai in some Thai sources; Hmong Lens, Hmoob Leeg

d) Reason for preferred name:
Speakers refer to themselves as “Hmong Njua” and are best known by this name in southeast Asia and western countries. "Njua” or "nzhuab" in the Hmong language means "green," the color that represents life and living things in Hmong thinking, and it is the basic color of the indigo-dyed linen skirts traditionally worn by Hmong Njua women. In the format "Hmong"-plus-modifier, the name is parallel to "Hmong Daw" (White Hmong), the other major group of speakers of Farwestern Hmongic languages outside of China.

e) Name and approximate population of ethnic group or community who use this language:
Hmong Njua: 40,000 in China (Hattaway, p. 204). 100,000 in Laos, 60,000 in Thailand, 100,000 in the USA (estimates in Johnson 1998, p. 30) 10,000 in Myanmar (Ethnologue 15th ed.). ?? in Vietnam. Population total all countries: about 300,000.

f) Preferred three letter identifier, if available: [hnj]

Your suggestion will be taken into account, but the Registration Authority will determine the identifier to be proposed. The identifiers is not intended to be an abbreviation for a name of the language, but to serve as a device to identify a given language uniquely. With thousands of languages, many sets of which have similar names, it is not possible to provide identifiers that resemble a language name in every case.
2. TEMPORAL DESCRIPTION and LOCATION

a) Is this a  
   [ ] Living language
   [ ] Nearly extinct/secondary use only (includes languages in revival)
   [ ] Recently extinct language
   [ ] Historical language
   [ ] Ancient language
   [ ] Artificially constructed language
   [ ] Macrolanguage

(Select one. See explanations of these types at [http://www.sil.org/iso639-3/types.asp](http://www.sil.org/iso639-3/types.asp))

b) Countries where used:
   China, Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, Myanmar, Australia, Canada, France, French Guiana and the USA.

c) Region within each country: towns, districts, states or provinces where used. Include GPS coordinates of the approximate center of the language, if possible:
   In China: southeastern Yunnan, especially Maguan and Malipo counties.
   In Vietnam: Sa Pa in NW Vietnam; many provinces of northern Viet Nam, probably some in Dac Lac Province in southern Viet Nam
   In Laos: northern Laos
   In Thailand: Chiangrai, Chiangmai, Maehongson, Tak, Phayao, Phrae, Nan, Phrae, Loei, Sukhothai, Kamphaengphet, Uthai and Petchabun provinces
   In Myanmar: northeastern Myanmar adjacent to Thailand

d) For an ancient or historical language, give approximate time frame; for a recently extinct language, give the approximate date of the last known user’s death

3. MODALITY AND LINGUISTIC AFFILIATION

a) This language is:  
   [ ] Signed
   [ ] Spoken
   [ ] Attested only in writings

b) Language family, if classified; origin, if artificially constructed:
   Hmong-Mien, Hmongic, Chuanqiandian

c) Closest language linguistically. For signed language, note influence from other signed or spoken languages:
   Other lects belonging to the Chuanqiandian sub-dialect of the Chuanqiandian Miao dialect as classified by Chinese linguists (Wang Fushi 1995, p. 6; Xian Songkui 1997, p. 26)
   Other Hmong Leng lects within the Southern Hua Miao group and Hmong Dle Ncha of Jinping in Yunnan (Johnson 1998 pp. 22, 31-33)

4. LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND USE

a) What written literature, inscriptions or recordings exist in this language? Are there newspapers, radio or television broadcasts, etc.?:
   Extensive literature in the Hmong RPA writing system for Hmong Njua is available in southeast Asia and western countries. Folktale collections and native literature focused on
culture preservation are available in standard Chuanqiandian orthography from nationalities publishing houses in China. Many VCD videos are available in both Hmong Daw and Hmong Njua, the content being folk festivals, traditional or contemporary Hmong music and dance, folk stories and historical fiction, full-length features with Hmong cultural themes, and classic movies dubbed into Hmong.

b) Is this language officially recognized by any level of government? Is it used in any levels of formal education as a language of instruction (for other subjects)? Is it taught in schools?
Mentioned in Chinese linguistics articles and books by Chinese linguists as a variety belonging to the Chuanqiandian sub-dialect of the Chuanqiandian Miao dialect (Wang Fushi 1995, p. 6; Xian Songkui 1997, p. 26)
Probably used in China as a medium of instruction in the initial grades of primary school in Hmong Nzhua villages, as an aid for transition to Mandarin Chinese.

c) Comment on factors of ethnolinguistic identity and informal domains of use:
Speakers take pride in the unique customs, clothing and hairstyles, and language of their local Hmong Njua sub-group but also consider themselves part of the larger Hmong ethnic group as well as citizens of the countries where they reside. The mother tongue is used in the home, community and market by speakers of all ages when speaking with other Hmong, but the national language is used when speaking with non-Hmong people. The mother tongue is being passed on to the younger generation, except among some Hmong Njua now living in cities. Elderly speakers may be monolingual in Hmong Njua, while middle-aged and younger speakers are generally bilingual in Hmong Njua and the national languages of the countries where they reside.

5. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

You do not need to repeat sources previously identified in the form, “Request for Change to ISO 639-3 Language Code”

a) First-hand knowledge. Describe:

b) Knowledge through personal communication. Describe:
A colleague has studied Hmong Njua for 5 years from the perspective of linguistics and language learning, and has talked with many speakers of Hmong Njua in the US, in Thailand and in China.

c) Knowledge from published sources. Include known dictionaries, grammars, etc. (please give complete bibliographical references):
Xian Songkui. 苗语西部方言次方言及土语的划分 (二) [Miaoyu Xibu Fangyan Cifangyan Ji...

Please return this form to:
ISO 639-3 Registrar
SIL International, Office of Language Information Systems
7500 West Camp Wisdom Road
Dallas, Texas 75236 USA
Email: iso639-3@sil.org
An email attachment of this completed form is preferred.

Further information:
If your request for a new language code element is supported by the Registration Authority as a formal proposal, you may be contacted separately by researchers working with the Ethnologue or with LinguistList asking you to provide additional information.

Sources of documentation for ISO 639-3 identifiers:

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