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: 2008-9-1

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

Associated Change request number : 2008-083 (completed by Registration Authority)
Tentative assignment of new identifier : xim (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:
      Xiamen Language

   b) Autonym (self-name) for this language:
      Ė-mīg-ōe

   c) Common alternate names and spellings of language, and any established abbreviations:
      Amoy language.

   d) Reason for preferred name:
      Xiamen is the modern pinyin version of the word "廈門話" whereas Amoy was previously used during the 19th and early twentieth century.

   e) Name and approximate population of ethnic group or community who use this language (complete individual language currently in use):
      Spoken by people living in Xiamen, Zhangzhou and Quanzhou including Taiwanese people whom originated from those areas. Over 10 million speakers.

   f) Preferred three letter identifier, if available: xim

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

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Historical language
Ancient language
Artificially constructed language
Macrolanguage

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

For individual languages, also complete:

b) Countries where used:
   People's Republic of China, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Philippines, Taiwan (where it
   is known as Taiwanese), Japan (due to large Taiwanese community in Tokyo-Yokohama
   Metropolitan Area).

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 Southern Fujian province: Xiamen, Zhangzhou, Quanzhou and Taiwan

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:

c) Closest language linguistically. For a Macrolanguage, list the individual languages (adopted and/or
   proposed) to be included in its group. For signed language, note influence from other signed or
   spoken languages:

4. LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND USE

a) What written literature, inscriptions or recordings exist in this language? Are there newspapers,
   radio or television broadcasts, etc.?:
   *The Xiamen (Amoy) dialect of Minnan was translated by Western Missionaries during the
   early 19th century (http://chinese.fudan.edu.cn/phoneticslab/theses/shj.htm). It is known as

Chinese to Taiwanese dictionary
(http://203.64.42.21/iug/ungian/SoannTeng/chil/taihoa.asp), which is based on the Xiamen
dialect of Minnan.
The current 'Minnan' Wikipedia (http://zh-min-nan.wikipedia.org/wiki/Th%C3%A2u-ia%CC%8Dh) is based on the Xiamen dialect of Minnan.

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?
Taiwanese (which is based on the Xiamen dialect of Minnan) is taught as a subject in some schools and used as a medium of instruction in others. Some companies have adopted it as their official language and Taiwanese broadcasts are now common (http://www.omniglot.com/writing/taiwanese.htm).

c) Comment on factors of ethnolinguistic identity and informal domains of use:
In 1842, as a result of the signing of the Treaty of Nanking, Xiamen (Amoy) was designated as a trading port. Xiamen and Gulangyu islands rapidly developed, which resulted in a large influx of people from neighboring areas such as Quanzhou and Zhangzhou. The mixture of these various accents have formed the basis for Amoy. Over the last several centuries, there have been a large number of descendents from these areas who have migrated to Taiwan. Eventually, Amoy became popularly known as Taiwanese among the locals living there. Just like British and American English, there are subtle lexical and phonologic differences between Taiwanese and Amoy, however these differences do not generally pose any barriers to communication.

The three Minnan 'dialects' can be found seen on this map: (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Banlamgu.svg)

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:
This is the language I speak. While in Australia, one of our taxi driver came from the Xiamen region of China and we were able to communicate fluently with him using our Taiwanese language.

b) Knowledge through personal communication. Describe:
There have been many stories of Taiwanese people who travelled to either Xiamen, Zhangzhou or Quanzhou for business purposes or holiday. They discovered that they could communicate with the locals there with ease.

c) Knowledge from published sources. Include known dictionaries, grammars, etc. (please give complete bibliographical references):
Chinese to Taiwanese dictionary (http://203.64.42.21/iug/ungian/SoannTeng/chil/taihoa.asp), which is based on the Xiamen dialect of Minnan).
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: