Comments received for
ISO 639-3 Change Request
2009-040

Outcome: Rejected
Effective date: February 3, 2012
Registration Authority decision on Change Request no. 2009-040: to retire the code element [lut] “Lushootseed”.

The request to retire the code [lut] for “Lushootseed” has been rejected. This request was originally announced as approved in January 2010. This immediately elicited a strong response from the Tulalip Tribal council, which asked for time to discuss the proposal, so the request was changed back to pending status. The tribal council met on December 8, 2011 to discuss concerns regarding the retirement of [lut] “Lushootseed”. They have requested that the code for Lushootseed [lut] not be retired as this would affect their efforts at encouraging and developing the language. The RA is thus complying by rejecting the current request to retire the Lushootseed [lut] code element. However, it is noted that confusion remains as to whether this code element properly refers to a particular variety (as indicated in Ethnologue) or should really be reinterpreted as a macrolanguage. If the latter is the case, the RA will welcome a change request to that effect. Because of the request of those most affected by the change, the request to retire the code [lut] for Lushootseed has been rejected.
January 11, 2011

Melinda Lyons
SIL International
7500 W. Camp Wisdom Road
Dallas TX 75236-5629, USA

International Organization for Standardization
ISO Central Secretariat
5, ch. de la Voie-Creuse
CP 56
CH-1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland

Re: The Proposed Decision to Retire LUT as a Code

Dear Ms. Lyons:

The Upper Skagit Indian Tribe is categorically opposed to any decision that would retire the designation LUT as a code. This decision was made without consultation and without notifying the sovereign Tribes where Lushootseed is and was spoken.

An Upper Skagit elder, Vi Hilbert, was responsible for revitalizing and teaching Lushootseed to tribal members, college students and others. Upper Skagit views the maintenance of all aspects of the language as a component part of maintaining this Tribe’s culture.

Language and culture define each other. The right to cultivate and preserve language is inherent to Upper Skagit’s sovereignty. With your decision to retire LUT without notification of our Tribal Government, we felt that you were engaging in the same techniques as the United States previously used in its Boarding School system. Whether intended or unintended, the Upper Skagit Indian Tribe views your actions as an attack on tribal culture.

On Dec. 8, 2011, The Tulalip Tribes hosted a meeting with other Lushootseed speaking Tribes to discuss concerns regarding the retirement of LUT. While Upper Skagit was unable to attend, we support the discussions of the historical significance of the term “Lushootseed.” Lushootseed means the speech of Puget Sound. The Lushootseed-speaking region extends along the shores of Puget Sound from modern-day Olympia to the Skagit watershed and from Hood canal to the Cascades. The term “Northern ” refers to the language as spoken by the Skagit, Swinomish, Sauk-Suiattle, Stillaguamish and neighboring
peoples; "Southern Lushootseed," is that spoken by the peoples of Snoqualmie, Muckleshoot, Puyallup, Nisqually, Squaxin Island, Suquamish and their neighbors.

Upper Skagit has additional concerns about the technical implications of losing LUT as a code. LUT is used to program keyboards with Lushootseed font; it is used by webpage search engines; it is used for categorization by libraries - we would lose all this and more if we lose this code. We are also very concerned with the possible loss of grant funding for Lushootseed if the code is retired. ISO codes are often used by funders to validate the existence of less commonly known languages. Further, we feel as Lushootseed speaking peoples that building on each other's work supports our requests for funding and broadens the numbers of funders we can apply to.

Retiring LUT is not an option. Our language is Lushootseed. It is the responsibility of the Tribes, not the linguists, to determine whether or not Lushootseed is a language and how it and Lushootseed dialects should be represented in code.

Upper Skagit trusts that a) the retirement decision will be reversed and b) your organizations will consult with this Tribe and the other Lushootseed speaking tribes if and when issues impacting tribal culture are under discussion. You may always address your comments and concerns to the Tribal Chairman at the above address.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Jennifer R. Washington, Tribal Chairman
Dec 2, 2011

SIL International
ISO 639-3 Registration Authority
7500 W. Camp Wisdom Rd., Dallas, TX 75236

Re: Registration Authority decision on Change Request no. 2009-040: to retire the code element [lut] Lushootseed: deferred

SIL International,

I am writing to you today to express gratitude for your willingness to involve Tulalip Tribes as you update the Ethnologue for its 17th edition and seek to simplify ISO Code 639-3 and to invite you to attend a meeting with Lushootseed speaking Tribes.

First of all I would like to convey our appreciation for the reinstatement of LUT and placing the decision on hold until Lushootseed speaking Tribes can meet after our initial communication in January 2010. We also appreciate very much that Melinda Lyons notified us that LUT would once again be up for consideration as you move forward on updating the Ethnologue. We ask that you continue to work with us on all changes which may affect the classification and coding of our heritage language.

In response to your notification, Tulalip will be hosting a meeting with Lushootseed speaking Tribes on December 8, 2011 at the Hibulb Cultural Center. We extend a sincere invitation for SIL International’s participation at this meeting. It begins at noon with a traditional meal and will end when the discussion is complete. The Hibulb Cultural Center is located at 6410 23rd Ave N.E., Tulalip, WA 98271.

Before closing, I reiterate our concern that any change could take place, and almost did, within your current process. Tribal Governments as sovereign entities must be involved in decisions regarding our languages from the outset. We request that you use this situation to develop a protocol for communication with our governments. We will gladly work with you and have several examples to recommend.

Please continue to hold your decision regarding LUT until you hear definitively from us.

With respect,

Chairman Mel Sheldon
The Tulalip Tribes of Washington State

Cc: Michele Balagot, Hank Gobin