Comments received for
ISO 639-3 Change Request
2010-013

Outcome: Reject
Effective date: May 18, 2011
Registration Authority decision on Change Request no. 2010-013: to create a new code element [llj] “Llanito”.

The request to create a distinct code for “Llanito” is rejected. The following excerpts from Levey, David. 2008. Language change and variation in Gibraltar. (IMPACT: Studies in Language and Society, 23.) Amsterdam: John Benjamins show that Llanito is a variant of Spanish and not a separate language:

“Although there may be three forms of communication in Gibraltar [n.b. English, Spanish, Yanito], I do not feel that Yanito can be considered as an autonomous language as such. Although for some it is a reflection of local identity, its linguistic proximity to Spanish gives it, to use Haugen’s (1966) terminology, heteronomous status in that it is a language variety which is socially or culturally dependent on an autonomous status. It... can perhaps best be described as an Andalusian Spanish-dominant form of oral expression which integrates mainly English lexical and syntactic elements as well as some local vocabulary.

For most people the most striking and distinguishing feature of the language of the Yanitos is their tendency to switch with apparent ease between Spanish and English, both inter-sententially and intro-sententially.” (Levey 2008:2,3).

“While Spanish syntax forms the backbone, Yanito is peppered with borrowings from other language. Although most comes from English” (p. 4), words can be traced to Genoese/Italian, Hebrew, Maltese/Arabic, Roma, etc. However, the ex-Minister of Education told him “Nowadays it is losing many of the Italian, Gypsy, and other odd words that set it apart from the varieties of Spanglish now spoken so widely” (p. 4).