

ISO 639-3 Registration Authority

Request for Change to ISO 639-3 Language Code

Change Request Number: 2011-160 (completed by Registration authority)

Date: 2012-1-19

Primary Person submitting request: Diana Cohen

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Postal address for primary contact person for this request (in general, email correspondence will be used):
P O Box 307, Chiang Mai THAILAND 50000

Do not be concerned about your responses causing the form text spacing or pagination to change. Use Shift-Enter to insert a new line in a form field (where allowed)

Types of change requests

This form is to be used in requesting changes (whether creation, modification, or deletion) to elements of the *ISO 639 Codes for the representation of names of languages — Part 3: Alpha-3 code for comprehensive coverage of languages*. The types of changes that are possible are to 1) modify the reference information for an existing code element, 2) retire a code element from use, including merging its scope of denotation into that of another code element, 3) split an existing code element into two or more separate language code elements, or 4) create a new code element. Fill out section 1, 2, 3, or 4 below as appropriate, plus section 5 to document the sources of your information. The process by which a change is received, reviewed and adopted is summarized on the final page of this form.

For changes of type 1, 2 or 3 (proposing a change to an existing code), please identify:

Affected ISO 639-3 identifier: hnj

Associated reference name: Hmong Njua

1. Modify an existing language code element

(a) What are you proposing to change:

- Language name
- Language type (living, extinct, historical, etc.)
- Language scope (individual language or macrolanguage)

(b) What new value(s) do you propose:

(c) Rationale for change:

2. Retire a language code element from use

(a) Reason for change:

- There is no evidence that the language exists.
- This is equivalent to another ISO 639-3 language.
- This is a variety that is fully intelligible with another ISO 639-3 language and should be merged with it.

(b) If one of the latter two reasons, with which ISO 639-3 code element (identifier and name) should it be merged :

(c) Rationale for change:

3. Split a language code element into two or more code elements

(a) List the languages into which this code element should be split:

1. Green Hmong (renaming and replacing hnj Hmong Njua and removing China as a country where the language is spoken)
2. Southern Hmong (varieties spoken in China; this new code will also include a portion of varieties from cqj Chuanqiandian Cluster Miao)

By the language identification criteria set forth in ISO 639-3, the simple fact of distinct identities is not enough to assign separate identifiers. The criteria are defined in the standard as follows:

For this part of ISO 639, judgments regarding when two varieties are considered to be the same or different languages are based on a number of factors, including linguistic similarity, intelligibility, a common literature (traditional or written), a common writing system, the views of users concerning the relationship between language and identity, and other factors. The following basic criteria are followed:

- Two related varieties are normally considered varieties of the same language if users of each variety have inherent understanding of the other variety (that is, can understand based on knowledge of their own variety without needing to learn the other variety) at a functional level.
- Where intelligibility between varieties is marginal, the existence of a common literature or of a common ethnolinguistic identity with a central variety that both understand can be strong indicators that they should nevertheless be considered varieties of the same language.
- Where there is enough intelligibility between varieties to enable communication, the existence of well-established distinct ethnolinguistic identities can be a strong indicator that they should nevertheless be considered to be different languages

(b) Referring to the criteria given above, give the rationale for splitting the existing code element into two or more languages:

While a certain amount of communication is possible between Green Hmong and Southern Hmong about concrete, everyday topics, recent informal testing has shown that Southern Hmong varieties spoken in China are not functionally intelligible with Green Hmong

varieties at a more abstract, complex level. Literature produced in Green Hmong in Southeast Asia and the West is not intelligible to speakers of Southern Hmong in China.

- (c) Does the language code element to be split represent a major language in which there already exists a significant body of literature and research? Are there contexts in which all the proposed separate languages may still be considered the same language—as in having a common linguistic identity, a shared (or undistinguished) body of literature, a written form in common, etc.? If so, please comment.

There is some existing literature and research, though most of it is based only on the varieties spoken in Southeast Asia and the West and does not include varieties spoken in China. Literature produced in Southeast Asia is not intelligible to speakers in China.

In order to complete the change request, the form “Request for New Language Code Element in ISO 639-3” (file name “ISO639-3_NewCodeRequestForm.doc” or “ISO639-3_NewCodeRequestForm.rtf”) must also be submitted for each new identifier that is to be created. That step can be deferred until this form has been processed by the ISO 639-3 registrar.

4. Create a new language code element

- (a) Name of missing language:
- (b) State the case that this language is not the same as or has not been included within any language that already has an identifier in ISO 639-3:

In order to complete the change request, the form “Request for New Language Code Element in ISO 639-3” (file name “ISO639-3_NewCodeRequest.doc” or “ISO639-3_NewCodeRequestForm.rtf”) must also be submitted to more fully document the new language.

5. Sources of information

Please use whichever of the points below are relevant in order to document the sources on which you have based the above proposal.

- (a) First-hand knowledge. Describe:
- SIL researchers have conducted field language research (survey work) including intelligibility testing between Green Hmong (Hmong Nzhuab) of Thailand and Southern Hmong, Northern Hmong, Black Hmong and Dananshan Hmong of China. Please see individual new code requests for specific data.
- List of sources describing data relating to wordlists, speaker self-evaluations and inherent intelligibility between Green Hmong and Southern Hmong and between Green Hmong and other varieties of Hmong spoken in China:
- *Andy Castro and Royce Flaming, 16 October 2009 "Honghe RTT Respondents' Individual Responses"

- *Andy Castro and Royce Flaming, 4 September 2009 "Wenshan RTT Respondents' Individual Responses"
- *Andy Castro and Royce Flaming, 4 September 2009, "Wenshan RTT Results"
- *Andy Castro and Royce Flaming, 16 October 2009, "Honghe RTT Results"
- *Andy Castro, 9 February 2010, Yunnan Hmong Dialect Survey Powerpoint Presentation slide #45 "Hmong Survey RTT Results."
- *Andy Castro and Royce Flaming, 20 January 2010, Wordlists with GT analysis, "Master list."
- *2008-2009 Yunnan, Guizhou and Thailand Hmong Survey Wordlist Samples
- *Robert McLaughlin, 29 October 2008 Dananshan and Thailand Hmong Nzhuab RTT Data and Test Scores, "Sociolinguistic Questionnaire Raw Scores," "Thailand RTT Raw Data," "NZH Childhood Story Text" and "NZH Bear Story Text."

(b) Knowledge through personal communication. Describe:

(c) Knowledge from published sources (please give complete bibliographical references):

The change proposal process

A request to change the code set goes through a five step process:

1. A user of ISO 639-3 proposes a change and submits it to the ISO 639-3 Registration Authority (ISO 639-3/RA) using this form.
2. The ISO 639-3 registrar processes the change request to verify that the request is compatible with the criteria set forth in the standard and to ensure that the submitter has supplied all necessary information. This may involve rounds of interaction with the submitter.
3. When the change request proposal is deemed to be sufficiently complete in its documentation (including all associated New Code Requests), the change request is promoted to "Proposed Change" status and the ISO 639-3 registrar posts the request on the official web site of the ISO 639-3/RA. Also at this time, an announcement is sent to appropriate discussion lists (those which express in their statement of purpose an interest in the language or language family in focus in the proposal, inviting individuals to review and comment on the proposal. The source of list information is the LinguistList Mailing List index, <http://cf.linguistlist.org/cfdocs/new-website/LL-WorkingDirs/lists/index.html>. Responses are sent to the ISO 639-3 registrar for compilation. The consensus of reviews may result in promotion to "Candidate Status" (with or without amendment), or withdrawal of the change request, if the conclusion is that the request is not in keeping with the stated criteria of the ISO 639-3 standard.

4. Three months prior to the end of the annual cycle of review and update, a new notice is posted on the official web site of the ISO 639-3/RA, and an announcement listing the Candidate Status Change Requests is posted to LINGUIST, <http://linguistlist.org/issues/index.html>, and other general language and linguistics discussion lists, as well as lists relating to specific languages or language families. All change requests are then open to further review and comment by any interested party for a period of three months.
5. At the end of the formal review period, a given Change Request may be: 1) adopted as a whole, 2) adopted in part (specific changes implicit in the whole Change Request may be adopted separately), 3) amended and resubmitted for the next review cycle, or 4) withdrawn from consideration. All change requests remain permanently archived at the official web site of the ISO 639-3/RA.

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
ISO 639-3/RA web site: <http://www.sil.org/iso639-3/>
E-mail: iso639-3@sil.org

An email attachment of this completed form is preferred.

Sources of documentation for ISO 639-3 identifiers:

Gordon, Raymond G., Jr. (ed.), 2005. *Ethnologue: Languages of the World*, Fifteenth edition. Dallas, Tex.: SIL International. Online version: <http://www.ethnologue.com/> .

LinguistList. Ancient and Extinct Languages. <http://cf.linguistlist.org/cfdocs/new-website/LL-WorkingDirs/forms/langs/GetListOfAncientLgs.html>

LinguistList. Constructed Languages. <http://cf.linguistlist.org/cfdocs/new-website/LL-WorkingDirs/forms/langs/GetListOfConstructedLgs.html>