ISO 639-3 Registration Authority

Request for Change to ISO 639-3 Language Code

Change Request Number: 2019-060 (completed by Registration authority)

Date: 2019 Aug 31

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

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 and will be posted on the ISO 639-3 website.

Types of change requests

Type of change proposed (check one):

1. □ Modify reference information for an existing language code element
2. □ Propose a new macrolanguage or modify a macrolanguage group
3. □ Retire a language code element from use (duplicate or non-existent)
4. □ Expand the denotation of a code element through the merging one or more language code elements into it (retiring the latter group of code elements)
5. ☒ Split a language code element into two or more new code elements
6. ☐ Create a code element for a previously unidentified language

For proposing a change to an existing code element, please identify:

Affected ISO 639-3 identifier: yue

Associated reference name: Yue Chinese

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

(a) List the languages into which this code element should be split:
   Northern Pinghua (Northern Ping Chinese)
   Southern Pinghua (Southern Ping Chinese)
   Yue Chinese (retaining name and ISO code)

(b) Referring to the criteria given above, give the rationale for splitting the existing code element into two or more languages:
   Pinghua is frequently listed as one of the primary branches of Chinese, based on sources such as Li Rong et al in the Language Atlas of China (1987, 2012). It is somewhat odd that ISO would accept the Atlas's split of [czh] Hui (Huizhou) from [wuu] Wu and [cjy] Jin (Jinyu) from [cmn] Mandarin, but not its third high-level break with tradition, Ping (Pinghua) from [yue] Yue.
Chappell & Lan (2016, p. 624), who also separate Pinghua from the Yue dialects, note that,

*Pinghua is classified into the Northern and Southern types, Guibeï 桂北 and Guinan 桂南, which are not mutually intelligible. Furthermore, the Northern type commonly has a six-tone system while the Southern type has eight to ten.*

(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.

The split of Ping from Yue is comparable in acceptance to the split of Hui (Huizhou) from Wu and Jin from Mandarin, both of which are accepted by the ISO. As with those cases, the remaining dialect family does not need to be renamed or recoded – [yue] is called “Yue” regardless of whether it is considered to include Ping. Thus this is effectively a pair of New Code requests, the only change to [yue] Yue being a slight narrowing of its scope.

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.

**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:

(b) Knowledge through personal communication. Describe:

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


Kurpaska, Maria (2010), *Chinese Language(s)*. Walter de Gruyter.


**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  
E-mail: [iso639-3@sil.org](mailto:iso639-3@sil.org)

An email attachment of this completed form is preferred.

**Sources of documentation for ISO 639-3 identifiers:**


"[http://linguistlist.org/forms/langs/GetListOfConstructedLgs.html](http://linguistlist.org/forms/langs/GetListOfConstructedLgs.html)"

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