

Comments received for
ISO 639-3 Change Request
2019-062

Outcome: Rejected
Effective date: January 23, 2020



SIL International ISO 639-3 Registration Authority

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Registration Authority decision on Change Request no. 2019-062: to split the code element [nan] for Min Nan Chinese and create the codes [nzl] for Leizhou Min Chinese, [nzq] Hainanese, [nzn] for Datian Min Chinese, [nzc] Chaoshan Min Chinese and [nzh] Hokkien Chinese.

The request to split the code element [nan] for Min Nan Chinese and create the codes [nzl] Leizhou Min Chinese, [nzq] Hainanese, [nzn] Datian Min Chinese, [nzc] Chaoshan Min Chinese and [nzh] Hokkien Chinese is rejected. The request to elevate the major dialects of Min Nan Chinese is based on an opening assertion that the varieties are not mutually intelligible, but then proceeds to argue in terms of issues general to China rather than evidence of specifics. The consensus of scholarly opinion (as reflected in Glottolog) appears to be to treat them as the dialects of a language. Furthermore, *An Encyclopedia of the 140 Languages of China* (W. Shearer and H. Sun, 2017) treats Min Nan Chinese as a dialect of the Chinese Language Complex and the varieties in question as subdialects. The Registrar has thus chosen to follow the preponderance of scholarship in leaving the varieties of Min Nan Chinese as dialects.