Comments received for
ISO 639-3 Change Request
2019-064

Outcome: Rejected
Effective date: January 23, 2020

The request to split the code element [hsn] Xiang Chinese and create the codes [cxc] Changyi Xiang Chinese, [cxj] Loushao Xiang Chinese, [cxj] Jixu Xiang Chinese, [cxh] Hengzhou Xiang Chinese and [cxy] Yongquan Chinese is rejected. The request to elevate the major dialects of Xiang Chinese to the level of languages is based on an opening assertion that the varieties are not mutually intelligible, but then the discussion proceeds to talk about the branching in the comparative analysis of dialects rather than giving evidence of non-intelligibility. 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 Xiang 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 Xiang Chinese as dialects.