ISO 639-3 Registration Authority
Request for New Language Code Element in ISO 639-3

This form is to be used in conjunction with a “Request for Change to ISO 639-3 Language Code” form

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Associated Change request number: 2021-045 (completed by Registration Authority)
Tentative assignment of new identifier: oân (completed by Registration Authority)

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. Use Shift-Enter to insert a new line in a form field (where allowed).

1. NAMES and IDENTIFICATION

a) Preferred name of language for code element denotation:
   Tâi-oân
b) Autonym (self-name) for this language:
   Tâi-oân (Tâi-oân-ōe)
c) Common alternate names and spellings of language, and any established abbreviations:
   Taiwanese, Holo, Hoklo, Holo Taiwanese; Tâi-gí, Tâi-gú, Hō-lō-ōe, Hōh-lō-ōe, 台灣話, 臺灣話, 台語, 臺語
d) Reason for preferred name:
   “Tâi-oân-ōe” (“Taiwan speech”) is the most common name for the language in the language itself, and has generally been called by the corresponding “Taiwanese” in English. Taiwanese is the de facto name of the language. For additional information, please refer to the paper accompanying this submission (Appendix A-1).

Attachment: https://github.com/KIRINPUTRA/reclassifying-ISO-639-3-nan
e) Name and approximate population of ethnic group or community who use this language (complete individual language currently in use):
Taiwanese is spoken actively by about 15 million in Taiwan (Formosa) and the Pescadores. There are probably a few million more dormant speakers, also largely native. For additional information on this and all following items, please refer to the paper accompanying this submission (§2.1).

f) Preferred three letter identifier, if available: oan

Your suggestion will be taken into account, but the Registration Authority will determine the identifier to be proposed. The identifiers is not intended to be an abbreviation for a name of the language, but to serve as a device to identify a given language uniquely. With thousands of languages, many sets of which have similar names, it is not possible to provide identifiers that resemble a language name in every case.

2. TEMPORAL DESCRIPTION and LOCATION

a) Is this a
- [x] Living language
- [ ] Nearly extinct/secondary use only (includes languages in revival)
- [ ] Recently extinct language
- [ ] Historical language
- [ ] Ancient language
- [ ] Artificially constructed language
- [ ] Macrolanguage

(Select one. See explanations of these types at http://www.sil.org/iso639-2D3/types.asp)

For individual languages, also complete:

b) Countries where used:
   Taiwan (also known historically as Formosa, and at present administered by the government of the Republic of China).

c) Region within each country: towns, districts, states or provinces where used. Include GPS coordinates of the approximate center of the language, if possible:
   Throughout, but particularly in the lowlands on the west coast of Formosa and in the north, and throughout the Pescadores.

d) For an ancient or historical language, give approximate time frame; for a recently extinct language, give the approximate date of the last known user’s death
   Hokkien.

3. MODALITY AND LINGUISTIC AFFILIATION

a) This language is:
- [ ] Signed
- [x] Spoken
- [ ] Attested only in writings

b) Language family, if classified; origin, if artificially constructed:
   Ethnologue: Sino-Tibetan
c) Closest language linguistically. For a Macrolanguage, list the individual languages (adopted and/or proposed) to be included in its group. For signed language, note influence from other signed or spoken languages:
Please refer to the attachment accompanying this submission (§2.1).

4. LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND USE

a) What written literature, inscriptions or recordings exist in this language? Are there newspapers, radio or television broadcasts, etc.?:
There is a substantial body of literature, including regular periodicals dating back to 1885. The Republic of China has not directly restricted Taiwanese-language broadcasting and publishing since the late 1980s. At present, there is a wide variety of TV programming in Taiwanese, although there is relatively little of it. Taiwanese has a more constant presence on the radio, where audiences skew older.

b) Is this language officially recognized by any level of government? Is it used in any levels of formal education as a language of instruction (for other subjects)? Is it taught in schools?:
Recognized implicitly in the Republic of China Development of National Languages Act (2019); one of close to two-dozen “national languages”. (Mandarin remains the only “official” language.) Grade school students can elect Taiwanese as a subject for an hour a week.

c) Comment on factors of ethnolinguistic identity and informal domains of use:
Politically subordinate to Mandarin. Younger speakers often prefer Mandarin; children often do not acquire active proficiency in the language, and some do not acquire passive proficiency. Please refer to the paper accompanying this submission (§2.1).
Sources of information

You do not need to repeat sources previously identified in the form, “Request for Change to ISO 639-3 Language Code”

a) First-hand knowledge. Describe:

b) Knowledge through personal communication. Describe:

c) Knowledge from published sources. Include known dictionaries, grammars, etc. (please give complete bibliographical references):

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
Email: iso639-3@sil.org
An email attachment of this completed form is preferred.

Further information:

If your request for a new language code element is supported by the Registration Authority as a formal proposal, you may be contacted separately by researchers working with the Ethnologue or with LinguistList asking you to provide additional information.

Sources of documentation for ISO 639-3 identifiers: