

# 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

Date: 2012-1-19

Name of Primary Requester: Carey McLaughlin

E-mail address: carey underscore mclaughlin at sil dot org

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

Robert McLaughlin, SIL International East Asia Group; robert underscore mclaughlin at sil dot org

Diana Cohen, SIL International East Asia Group; diana underscore cohen at sil dot org

Associated Change request number : 2011-161

(completed by Registration Authority)

Tentative assignment of new identifier : hnr

(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:  
Northern Hmong
- b) Autonym (self-name) for this language:  
Hmong Soud, Hmong Bes, Hmong Ndrous
- c) Common alternate names and spellings of language, and any established abbreviations:  
Flowery Hmong, Hua Miao, Northern Hua Miao, Hmoob Xauv, Hmoob Peg, Hmoob Nraug
- d) Reason for preferred name:  
The name Flowery Hmong or Hua Miao refers to multiple related but not mutually intelligible varieties. Because there are three ethnonyms for this group, a term which applies to all the people is preferred over choosing one of the ethnonyms. For the sake of consistency, this name was mutually agreed upon by members of several organizations working with Hmong languages in China and Southeast Asia.
- e) Name and approximate population of ethnic group or community who use this language:  
Hmong Soud, Hmong Ndrous, Hmong Bes; population unknown; combined population for Northern Hmong and Dananshan Hmong estimated at 500,000 according to Michael Johnson 1998 "Farwestern Hmongic", unpublished manuscript.
- f) Preferred three letter identifier, if available: mso

Your suggestion will be taken into account, but the Registration Authority will determine the identifier to be proposed. The identifier 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  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/iso639-3/types.asp>)

- b) Countries where used:  
P. R. 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:  
Yunnan Province
- 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

## 3. MODALITY AND LINGUISTIC AFFILIATION

- a) This language is:  Signed  Spoken  Attested only in writings
- b) Language family, if classified; origin, if artificially constructed:  
Hmong-Mien, Hmongic, Chuanqiandian
- c) Closest language linguistically. For signed language, note influence from other signed or spoken languages:  
1. Dananshan Hmong  
2. Black Hmong

## 4. LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND USE

- a) What written literature, inscriptions or recordings exist in this language? Are there newspapers, radio or television broadcasts, etc.?:  
none

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?:  
no

c) Comment on factors of ethnolinguistic identity and informal domains of use:  
Estimate of ethnolinguistic vitality: 6a "Vigorous" for Hmong within China where very few speakers are using the written form of the language despite sporadic, short-term literacy classes offered by the language commission or schools. However the language is used orally by all generations and the situation is sustainable.

Ethnolinguistic identity: Black Hmong identify themselves as part of the "Miao" nationality of China and part of the worldwide "Hmong" language group. However, they do acknowledge variety among the kinds of Miao/Hmong spoken languages, recognizing that there are some Hmong groups whom they understand well and others whom they cannot understand at all.

## 5. 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:

SIL researchers have conducted field language research (survey work) including intelligibility testing among this and related language varieties.

### Speakers' Self-Evaluation

Regarding Northern Hmong speakers' own recognition of their varying comprehension levels of other Hmong/Miao languages, see Andy Castro and Royce Flaming's 16 October 2009 "Honghe RTT Respondents' Individual Responses." For example, Hmong Ndrous respondent #5 at Y24 replied that he understands Hmong Soud and White Hmong speakers but does not understand Guizhou Miao speakers. Also, Hmong Bes respondent #7 at Y26 replied that he understands Hmong Buak, Hmong Shib and White Hmong but does not understand the Sinicized Hmong of Guizhou.

### Inherent Intelligibility

Regarding inherent intelligibility between Northern Hmong and other varieties of Hmong, see Andy Castro and Royce Flaming, 4 September 2009, "Wenshan RTT Results" and 16 October 2009, "Honghe RTT Results" for the following data:

\*Thailand Hmong Nzhuab texts tested on Hmong Soud in 1 Wenshan location: average scores of 76% and 72% on 2 stories; tested on 3 Honghe varieties of Northern Hmong (Soud, Ndrous and Bes each in separate locations): average scores of 74%, 94%, 96% and 97% on 2 stories

\*Dananshan Hmong texts tested on Hmong Soud in 2 Wenshan locations: average scores of 91%, 85% and 72% on 2 stories; tested on 3 Honghe varieties of Northern Hmong (Soud, Ndrous and Bes each in a separate location): average scores of 92%, 81% and 66%

\*Southern Hmong (Hmong Shib of Wenshan County) text tested on Hmong Soud in 1 Wenshan location: average scores of 100%; tested on Hmong Ndrous and Hmong Bes in Honghe: average scores of 100% in both locations. The high rate of comprehension of Hmong Shib by Northern Hmong is most likely due to acquired intelligibility through language contact (intermarriage, trade, DVD movies and radio broadcasts), not inherent intelligibility.

\*White Hmong text tested on Hmong Ndrous in Honghe: average score 80%

\*Black Hmong texts were not tested on Northern Hmong speakers during the survey

### Lexical Similarity

Regarding lexical similarity between Northern Hmong and other varieties of Hmong, see Andy Castro's Table of Lexical Similarity, 9 February 2010, "Yunnan Hmong Dialect Survey Powerpoint Presentation":

\*Within Northern Hmong, Hmong Soud, Hmong Ndrous and Hmong Bes show high percentages of lexical similarity, ranging from 91.6 to 97.2

\*Northern Hmong varieties (Soud, Ndrous and Bes) show fairly high lexical similarity with Black Hmong varieties (Buak and Dlob), with percentages ranging from 86.8 to 94.1

\*Northern Hmong varieties also show fairly high lexical similarity with Southern Hmong varieties (Shib, Nzhuab, Lens), with percentages ranging from 87.4 to 92.4

\*Northern Hmong varieties show intermediate lexical similarity with White Hmong spoken in different locations, with percentages ranging from 80.7 to 90.1

\*Lexical similarity of Northern Hmong was not calculated in comparison to Dananshan Hmong or Green Hmong. Compare wordlists in "2008-2009 Yunnan and Guizhou Hmong Survey Wordlist Samples" abridged from 20 January 2010 Andy Castro and Royce Flaming, Wordlists with GT analysis, "Master list."

b) Knowledge through personal communication. Describe:

c) Knowledge from published sources. Include known dictionaries, grammars, etc. (please give complete bibliographical references):  
Castro, Andy & Gu Chaowen. 2010. Phonological innovation among Hmong dialects of Wenshan. *Journal of the Southeast Asian Linguistics Society*, Volume 3.1:1-39.

Castro, Andy, Royce Flaming & Luo Youliang. 2012 (accepted). A phonological and lexical comparison of Western Miao dialects in Honghe. *SIL Electronic Survey Reports*.

Johnson, Michael. 1998. "Farwestern Hmongic." Unpublished manuscript

**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/default.asp>  
Email: [iso639-3@sil.org](mailto: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:**

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://linguistlist.org/forms/langs/GetListOfAncientLgs.html>

LinguistList. Constructed Languages. <http://linguistlist.org/forms/langs/GetListOfConstructedLgs.html>