

ISO 639-3 Registration Authority

Request for Change to ISO 639-3 Language Code

Change Request Number: 2008-047 (completed by Registration authority)

Date: 2008-8-4

Primary Person submitting request: Wendy Sandler

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Postal address for primary contact person for this request (in general, email correspondence will be used):
Sign Language Research Lab, University of Haifa, 31905 Haifa, Israel

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

This form is to be used in requesting changes (whether creation, modification, or deletion) to elements of the *ISO 639 Codes for the representation of names of languages — Part 3: Alpha-3 code for comprehensive coverage of languages*. The types of changes that are possible are to 1) modify the reference information for an existing code element, 2) propose a new macrolanguage or modify a macrolanguage group; 3) retire a code element from use, including merging its scope of denotation into that of another code element, 4) split an existing code element into two or more new language code elements, or 5) create a new code element for a previously unidentified language variety. Fill out section 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 below as appropriate, and the final section documenting the sources of your information. The process by which a change is received, reviewed and adopted is summarized on the final page of this form.

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:

Associated reference name:

1. Modify an existing language code element

(a) What are you proposing to change:

- Language reference name; generally this is changed only if it is erroneous; if usage is shifting to a new preferred form, the new form may be added (next box)
- Language additional names
- Language type (living, extinct, historical, etc.)
- Language scope (individual language or macrolanguage)

(b) What new value(s) do you propose:

(c) Rationale for change:

2. Propose a new macrolanguage or modify a macrolanguage group

(a) For an existing Macrolanguage, what change to its individual language membership do you propose:

(b) Rationale for change:

For a new Macrolanguage proposal, please also complete the form “Request for New Language Code Element in ISO 639-3” (file name “ISO639-3_NewCodeRequest.doc” or “ISO639-3_NewCodeRequestForm.rtf”), which must also be submitted to fully document the intended meaning for the new macrolanguage.

3. Retire a language code element from use

(a) Reason for change:

- There is no evidence that the language exists.
- This is equivalent to another ISO 639-3 language.

(b) If equivalent with another code element, with which ISO 639-3 code element (identifier and name) is it equivalent:

(c) Rationale for change:

4. Expand the denotation of a code element through merging of one or more code elements

(a) List the languages (identifier and name) to be merged into this code element and retired from use:

(b) Rationale for change

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

- (a) List the languages into which this code element should be split:

By the language identification criteria set forth in ISO 639-3, the simple fact of distinct identities is not enough to assign separate identifiers. The criteria are defined in the standard as follows:

For this part of ISO 639, judgments regarding when two varieties are considered to be the same or different languages are based on a number of factors, including linguistic similarity, intelligibility, a common literature (traditional or written), a common writing system, the views of users concerning the relationship between language and identity, and other factors. The following basic criteria are followed:

- Two related varieties are normally considered varieties of the same language if users of each variety have inherent understanding of the other variety (that is, can understand based on knowledge of their own variety without needing to learn the other variety) at a functional level.
 - Where intelligibility between varieties is marginal, the existence of a common literature or of a common ethnolinguistic identity with a central variety that both understand can be strong indicators that they should nevertheless be considered varieties of the same language.
 - Where there is enough intelligibility between varieties to enable communication, the existence of well-established distinct ethnolinguistic identities can be a strong indicator that they should nevertheless be considered to be different languages
- (b) Referring to the criteria given above, give the rationale for splitting the existing code element into two or more languages:
- (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.

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.

6. Create a new language code element

- (a) Name of missing language: Al-Sayyid Bedouin Sign Language
- (b) State the case that this language is not the same as or has not been included within any language that already has an identifier in ISO 639-3:
This language has been shown in our publications to be an independent language (see (c) below). It is not the same as and has not been included within any language that already

has an identifier in ISO 639-3. The Al Sayyid Bedouin group was founded about two hundred years ago in the Negev region of present-day Israel. The group is now in its seventh generation and contains about 3,500 members, all of whom reside together in a single community exclusive of others. Consanguineous marriage has been the norm in the group since its third generation. Such marriage patterns are common in the area and lead to very strong group-internal bonds and group-external exclusion. Within the past three generations, approximately 120-150 individuals with congenital deafness have been born into the community, all of them descendants of two of the founders' five sons. Thus, the time at which the language originated, and the number of generations through which it has passed, can be pinpointed. All deaf individuals show profound prelingual neurosensory hearing loss at all frequencies, have an otherwise normal phenotype, and are of normal intelligence. Scott et al (Scott, D., Carmi, R., Eldebour, K., Duyk, G., Stone, E. & Sheffield, V. (1995) *American Journal of Human Genetics* 57, 965-968), identify the deafness as (recessive) DFNB1 and show that it has a locus on chromosome 13q12 similar to the locus of several other forms of nonsyndromic deafness. In a detailed anthropological study of deafness in the Al-Sayyid community, Kisch (see last reference below) showed that the deaf members of the community are fully integrated into its social structure and are not shunned or stigmatized. Kisch was the first to report that the deaf members of the community and a significant fraction of its hearing members communicate by means of a sign language. Siblings and children of deaf individuals, and other members of a household (which may include several wives and their children) often become fluent signers. Members of the community generally recognize the sign language as a second language of the village. Hearing people there routinely assess their own proficiency, praising those with greater facility in the language. Those who have any familiarity with Israeli Sign Language, including those who have attended schools for the deaf outside the village, recognize that the two sign languages are distinct. Nor do Al-Sayyid signers understand the Jordanian sign language used in simultaneous interpreting on Jordanian television programs received in the area. Signers readily use their language to relate information beyond the here and now, such as descriptions of folk remedies and cultural traditions, some of which are no longer in force. We have documented personal histories of deaf members of the community and witnessed conversations about topics as diverse as social security benefits, construction techniques, and fertility.

In order to complete the change request, the form "Request for New Language Code Element in ISO 639-3" (file name "ISO639-3_NewCodeRequest.doc" or "ISO639-3_NewCodeRequestForm.rtf") must also be submitted to more fully document the new language.

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:

My colleagues and I have been investigating this language for several years. We have systematically compared vocabulary, morphology, and syntax with those of Israeli Sign Language, the sign language used by the broader deaf community in Israel, and found that the two are distinct languages at all three levels of structure. See list of our publications in (c).

(b) Knowledge through personal communication. Describe:
We have confirmed that ABSL is not mutually intelligible with Israeli Sign Language through personal communication with ISL signers. Our ISL research assistants are unable to translate videotapes of ABSL. ABSL signers report to us that they do not understand the sign language interpreting on Jordanian television.

(c) Knowledge from published sources (please give complete bibliographical references):
Sandler, Wendy, Meir, Irit, Padden, Carol, and Aronoff, Mark. (2005). The Emergence of Grammar in a New Sign Language. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. Vol 102, No. 7. 2661-2665.

Aronoff, Mark, Padden, Carol, Meir, Irit, and Sandler, Wendy. (2004) Morphological Universals and the Sign Language Type. In Geert Booij and Jaap van Marle (eds.), *Yearbook of Morphology 2004*. Dordrecht / Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers. 19-40.

Meir, Irit, Padden, Carol, Aronoff, Mark, and Sandler, Wendy (2007). Body as subject. (PDF) *Journal of Linguistics* 43, 531-563.

Padden, Carol, Meir, Irit, Sandler, Wendy, and Aronoff, Mark. In press. Against all expectations: Encoding subjects and objects in a new language. In press. In D. Gerdtts, J. Moore & M. Polinsky, (Eds.) *Hypothesis A/Hypothesis B: Linguistic Explorations in Honor of David M. Perlmutter*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Aronoff Mark, Meir, Irit, Padden, Carol, & Sandler, Wendy (2008). The roots of linguistic organization in a new language. (PDF) In *Holophrasis, Compositionality And Protolanguage*, Special Issue of *Interaction Studies*. Derek Bickerton and Michael Arbib (Eds.) pp. 133-149.

Al-Fityani, K. & Padden, C. (submitted paper). Sign language geography in the Arab world. In D. Brentari (Ed.), *Sign Languages: A Cambridge Language Survey*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Kisch, S. (2004), Negotiating (genetic) deafness in a Bedouin community. In J. van Cleve (Ed.) *Genetics, Disability and Deafness*, pp. 148-173. Washington DC: Gallaudet University Press

The change proposal process

A request to change the code set goes through a six-step process:

1. A user of ISO 639-3 proposes a change and submits it to the ISO 639-3 Registration Authority (ISO 639-3/RA) using this form.
2. The ISO 639-3 registrar processes the change request to verify that the request is compatible with the criteria set forth in the standard and to ensure that the submitter has supplied all necessary information. This may involve rounds of interaction with the submitter.
3. When the change request proposal is complete in its documentation (including all associated New Code Requests), the change request is promoted to “Proposed Change” status and the ISO 639-3 registrar posts the request on the official web site of the ISO 639-3/RA. Also at this time, an announcement is sent to anyone requesting notification of new proposals matching their specified

criteria (region and/or language family of interest). Periodically, a message maybe sent to the general LINGUIST discussion list on Linguist List (<http://linguistlist.org/issues/index.html>), and other appropriate discussion lists, inviting individuals to review and comment on pending proposals. Anyone may request from the ISO 639-3 registrar to receive notification regarding proposals involving languages in a specific region of the world or specific language family.

4. Individuals may send comments to the ISO 639-3 registrar for compilation. The consensus of early reviews may result in promotion to “Candidate Status” (with or without amendment), or withdrawal of the change request, if the conclusion is that the request is not in keeping with the stated criteria of the ISO 639-3 standard.
5. Three months prior to the end of the annual cycle of review and update, a new notice is posted on the official web site of the ISO 639-3/RA, and an announcement listing the Candidate Status Change Requests is posted to the LINGUIST discussion list and other discussion lists, as requested by their owners. All change requests are then open to further review and comment by any interested party for a period of three months. A Change Request received after the start of Candidacy phase must wait until the next annual cycle for consideration. The purpose of this phase is to ensure that a minimum of three months is allotted for the review of every proposal.
6. At the end of the formal review period, a given Change Request may be: 1) adopted as a whole; 2) adopted in part (specific changes implicit in the whole Change Request may be adopted separately); 3) rejected as a whole; or 4) amended and resubmitted for the next review cycle. All change requests remain permanently archived at the official web site of the ISO 639-3/RA.

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/>
E-mail: iso639-3@sil.org

An email attachment of this completed form is preferred.

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/> .

Linguist List. Ancient and Extinct Languages. <http://linguistlist.org/forms/langs/GetListOfAncientLgs.html>

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