

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: 2008-8-4

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Associated Change request number : 2008-047

(completed by Registration Authority)

Tentative assignment of new identifier : syy

(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:
Al-Sayyid Bedouin Sign Language
- b) Autonym (self-name) for this language:
Bedouin Sign Language
- c) Common alternate names and spellings of language, and any established abbreviations:
The tribe and its language were given the pseudonym Abu Shara by then anthropology student Shifra Kisch. This name was also used in one linguistics article on the language by the four linguists investigating the language (Wendy Sandler, Irit Meir, Carol Padden and Mark Aronoff). However, as the real name of the village appeared in newspaper articles, and due to the eagerness of the villagers to be known by their real name to the general public, there was no longer any reason to keep the name of the village secret, and the language was then given the actual name of the tribe: Al-Sayyid.
- d) Reason for preferred name:
Al-Sayyid Bedouin Sign Language (ABSL) is the name that the four researchers investigating the language (Wendy Sandler, Irit Meir, Carol Padden and Mark Aronoff) have used in the published articles on the language, and the name by which it is most widely known in the English-speaking world. The shorter name given in 1b, if it were used widely, would have the potential of being confused with any other Bedouin communities with a deaf population that are likely to have their own sign language. As for rejecting the pseudonym, see (1c). The suggested code letters SYD are the Semitic root consonants of the tribe name, Sayyid.

- e) Name and approximate population of ethnic group or community who use this language (complete individual language currently in use):
Approximately 120-150 deaf people and many of the 3,500 hearing people in the village
- f) Preferred three letter identifier, if available: SYD

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
- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Living language |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Nearly extinct/secondary use only (includes languages in revival) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Recently extinct language |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Historical language |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Ancient language |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Artificially constructed language |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 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:
Israel
- c) Region within each country: towns, districts, states or provinces where used. Include GPS coordinates of the approximate center of the language, if possible:
Al-Sayyid village, Negev district
- 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:
- 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:
None known

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 of the above

- 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:

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 (i) 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, and ISL signers do not understand ABSL. 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.

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):
See list of publications in the "Request for Change to ISO 639-3 Language Code" form.

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
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>