ISO 639-3 Registration Authority

Request for Change to ISO 639-3 Language Code

Change Request Number: 2008-060 (completed by Registration authority)

Date: 2008-8-5

Primary Person submitting request: Nora C. England

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

Postal address for primary contact person for this request (in general, email correspondence will be used): Department of Linguistics, University of Texas at Austin, 1 University Station B5100, Austin TX 78712

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: tzh

Associated reference name: Oxchuc Tzeltal

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: Tzeltal

(c) Rationale for change:
The name is a dialect or dialect group name, and therefore incorrect for a language designation. It should be changed to the general language name. There is almost no disagreement among linguists about what the general language names for Mayan languages are. The majority of the Ethnologue/ISO names are, however, dialect names. Please see section 4 for an elaboration of the languages according to family divisions and branches.

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_NewCode RequestForm.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:
tzb Bachajón Tzeltal

(b) Rationale for change

The “languages” to be merged are in fact dialects or dialect groups within a single language. All historical linguists who work on Mayan agree on almost all of the actual languages in terms of identity (there is some disagreement about how the family is ramified), and agree that there are many fewer than are listed in Ethnologue or by ISO. The ISO codes taken from Ethnologue represent some of the dialects of different Mayan languages, but are not even a complete or accurate listing of dialects. At any rate, the distinctions they make need to be made at the level of dialect designations or codes, not language codes. If for some reason it is decided to maintain dialect distinctions in the codes for Mayan languages instead of merging the separate codes, then each language needs a separate general code to designate the language as a whole rather than one of its dialects. The languages about which there is still some discussion are: Achi (most linguists agree that it is a dialect (group) of K’ichee’, but speakers have chosen overwhelmingly to identify it as a separate language), Cholti’ (separate extinct language or ancestral language?), Motozintlec and Tuzantec (dialects of Mocho’ or separate languages?). The classification originally made by Terrence Kaufman and supported by the work of Lyle Campbell is that which is generally accepted, while the classification made by John Robertson is in agreement on most of the language names but disagrees on some of the family divisions. The list of currently accepted names of Mayan languages, arranged according to the family divisions and branches proposed by Kaufman, follows. I am using Mayan spelling for the Guatemalan languages, since there is general agreement among speakers of these languages to use these spellings. Language names are preceded by a hyphen.

Huastecan division: -Huastec, -Chicomuceltec (extinct)

Yucatecan division: -Yucatec Maya, -Lacandon, -Itzaj, -Mopan

Western division, Greater Tzeltalan branch, Cholan: -Ch’olti’ (ancestral form of Ch’orti’ or extinct lg?), -Ch’orti’, -Chol, -Chontal

Western division, Greater Tzeltalan branch, Tzeltalan: -Tzotzil, -Tzeltal

Western division, Greater Q’anjob’alan branch, Chujean: -Tojolab’al, -Chuj

Western division, Greater Q’anjob’alan branch, Q’anjob’alan Proper, Q’anjob’al complex: -Q’anjob’al, -Akateko, -Popti’ (Jakalteko)

Western division, Greater Q’anjob’alan branch, Cotoque complex (2 languages or 2 dialects?): -Mocho’ (Motozintleco, Tuzanteco)

Eastern division, Greater Mamean branch, Mamean Proper: -Teko, -Mam

Eastern division, Greater Mamean branch, Ixilan: -Awakateko, -Ixil

Eastern division, Greater K’ichee’an branch: -Uspanteko

Eastern division, Greater K’ichee’an branch, K’ichee’an Proper: -Sipakapense, -Sakapulteko, -K’ichee’, -Achi (also considered a dialect group within K’ichee’), -Tz’utujiil, -Kaqchikel

Eastern division, Greater K'ichee'an branch, Poqom: -Poqomam, -Poqomchi'

Eastern division, Greater K'ichee'an branch: -Q'eqchi'

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:

(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:

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:
I have been doing research on Mayan linguistics since 1971. My major research has been on Mam but I have personally worked on Mam, Teko, Awakateko, Ixil, K'ichee', Kaqchikel, Poqomam, Poqomchi', Tz'utujiil, Q'eqchi', Achi, Uspanteko, Sakapulteko, Q'anjob'al, Popti', Ch'orti', and Chol. I have furthermore read very widely in the field and teach a graduate course about the structure of Mayan languages. I personally know almost everyone who works on Mayan linguistics.

(b) Knowledge through personal communication. Describe:

(c) Knowledge from published sources (please give complete bibliographical references):
for example:
Campbell, Lyle. 1999. Historical Linguistics: An Introduction. Cambridge: MIT Press. See family tree on page 171.

Kaufman, Terrence. 1974. Idiomas de Mesoamerica. Guatemala City: Editorial Jose de Pineda Ibarra, Ministerio de Educacion. See family tree on page 85.

Kaufman, Terrence. 1976. Archaeological and linguistic correlations in Mayaland and associated areas of Meso-America. World Archaeology Vol. 8 No. 1: 101-118. See family tree on page 103.

Robertson, John s. 1992. The History of Tense/Aspect/Mood/Voice in the Mayan Verbal Complex. Austin: University of Texas Press. See family tree on page 3.

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