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: 2008-8-25

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See also: http://www.linguistik.uni-kiel.de/ProjektinformationVV.html.

Associated Change request number : 2008-069 (completed by Registration Authority)
Tentative assignment of new identifier : vra (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:
      Vera’a

   b) Autonym (self-name) for this language:
      Vera’a

   c) Common alternate names and spellings of language, and any established abbreviations:
      Vetrat – Vatrata

   d) Reason for preferred name:
      "Vatrata" is not, and never was, used by the local community. It was chosen by XIXth-c. missionaries based on another language (Mota). The speakers designate their village and language as Vera’a (apostrophe = glottal stop). This is also the spelling which I have adopted in my scientific work, and which has been used by other scholars ever since. "Vatrata" is used by nobody else than Codrington (1885).
      As for "Vetrat", it is the name of the place & language, in the dominant language of Vanua Lava (Vurës [msn]).

   e) Name and approximate population of ethnic group or community who use this language (complete individual language currently in use):
      This language is spoken by the population of one village, Vera’a, by about 300 speakers.

   f) Preferred three letter identifier, if available: VRA

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 [ ] 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)

For individual languages, also complete:

b) Countries where used:
   Vanuatu

c) Region within each country: towns, districts, states or provinces where used. Include GPS coordinates of the approximate center of the language, if possible:
   Vanua Lava island, Vera’a village on the west coast [-13.872247 South,167.43722 East]

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:
   Austronesian, Malayo-Polynesian, Central-Eastern, Eastern Malayo-Polynesian, Oceanic, Central-Eastern Oceanic, Remote Oceanic, North and Central Vanuatu, Northeast Vanuatu-Banks Islands, East Vanuatu

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:
   The closest language is called Lemerig; it is not listed in the Ethnologue (I am requesting a proper language code for it). Lemerig was considered originally a dialect of Vatrata, which it is not.
   Otherwise, Vurês (currently [msn]) is rather close to Vera’a, both linguistically and geographically.

4. LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND USE

a) What written literature, inscriptions or recordings exist in this language? Are there newspapers, radio or television broadcasts, etc.?:
No written literature. Mainly some sound recordings: a few by myself, Dr Alex François (2003, 2006), and many by Dr Stefan Schnell, currently documenting the language Vera'a.

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, not much. But some literacy material was produced by Dr Catriona Hyslop in 2000 I think, for use in schools.

c) Comment on factors of ethnolinguistic identity and informal domains of use:

**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:
I've been doing fieldwork in the whole Banks & Torres area since 1997. More specifically, I worked on Vera'a during several sessions in 2003 and 2006.

b) Knowledge through personal communication. Describe:
The accuracy of the name "Vera'a" will be confirmed to you by Dr Hyslop and Dr Schnell (addresses above).

c) Knowledge from published sources. Include known dictionaries, grammars, etc. (please give complete bibliographical references):
I am aware of the following publication mentioning Vera’a with this name:

See also:
http://www.linguistik.uni-kiel.de/ProjektinformationVV.html.

**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: