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: 2009-9-1

Name of Primary Requester: Paoze Thao, Ph.D., President of the Mong Federation, Inc. and Professor of Linguistics and Education at California State University Monterey Bay

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Names, affiliations and email addresses of additional supporters of this request:
Paoze Thao, Ph.D., President of the Mong Federation, Inc. and Professor of Linguistics and Education at California State University, Monterey Bay and the Mong-speaking population hereby submits this request for a new language code for the Mong language. Along with this request are letters of support from various institutions, individuals, and 1,000 head of households with their names and signatures, that represent approximately 6,000 - 7,000 supporters to request for a new Language Code Element in ISO 639-3 for the Mong language. (Letters of support and about 1,000 signatures of head of households representing about 6,000 people in California, Oregon, Minnesota, North Carolina, and Wisconsin sent separately to the Registration Authority.)

Associated Change request number : 2009-090 (completed by Registration Authority)
Tentative assignment of new identifier : mjb (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:
   Mong

b) Autonym (self-name) for this language:
   Hmong Njua (with alternate spellings Mong Ntsua, Hmong Nzhua); some speakers in Thailand, Laos and the USA also call themselves Hmong Lens (Hmoob Leeg). These spelling terms derived from the non-Mong and they're all in error.

c) Common alternate names and spellings of language, and any established abbreviations:
   Hmong Njua, Mong Ntsua, Hmong Nzhua, Blue Hmong, Blue Meo, Green Hmong, Green Meo, Qing Miao, Ching Miao, Lu Mia; Meo Dam or Meo Lai in some Thai sources; Hmong Lens, Hmoob Leeg, Mong Leng, Hmong Leng, Blue Mong, Moob Leeg, Moob Ntsuab.

d) Reason for preferred name:
   "Mong" is the name of our language and it truly reflects and represents the linguistic aspect of our spoken language as well as our culture. We very much appreciate the efforts of those who attempted to establish a language code for our people; however, what had been created as indicated in b) and c) on the above are in errors and we want to correct these misspellings because they misrepresent the Mong language. (See attached the two articles: Thao, P. and Yang, C. (2004, July 1). "The Mong and The Hmong" The Mong Journal, Vol. 1; and Thao, P. (2004, Dec.) The Mong American families. The Mong Journal, Vol. 2). The spelling term "Mong" was derived from our language and culture. Our people are very proud of our costumes and cultures and many of our people from different regions...
of the world often refer to themselves based on the color of our costumes to others. As a result, many names were recorded incorrectly by the non-Mong. The fact and the truth are that we have always called our language "Mong." Mong is a language by itself and it has been in existence since the existence of mankind, but its language code has not been established. For this very reason, we request your consideration to establish a language code for the Mong language.

e) Name and approximate population of ethnic group or community who use this language:
Mong with an estimated population of 2.3 million worldwide. Subgroups of the Mong include the Mong Leng, Mong Njua, Mong Shua, and Mong Dlu, all speaking the Mong language.

f) Preferred three letter identifier, if available: Mon

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)

b) Countries where used:
China (about 1.5 million); Vietnam (450,000); Laos (150,000); Thailand (80,000); Myanmar (22,500), France (2,000); French Guiana (300); Australia (400); Canada (600); Germany (30); New Zeland (a family of 9); and the United States (90,000);

c) Region within each country: towns, districts, states or provinces where used. Include GPS coordinates of the approximate center of the language, if possible:
In China, Shuxyun, a scholar who has lived and has travelled extensively throughout the various provinces in China for the last 10 years reported that the Mong language is used in the following provinces: Yunnan, Sichuan, Chongqing, Western Guizhou, Guangxi, and Hainan (Feb 21, 2007); In Vietnam, Mong language is used in Thanh Hoa, Bac Can, Lan Son, Ha Giang, Tuyen Quang, Lao Cai, Yen Bai, Lai Chau, Son La, Cao Bang, Nghe An, Dalat, and Lam Dong (report from a not-for-profit organization providing services to the minorities in East and Southeast Asia); in Laos, Mong language is used in Phongsali, Luang Namtha, Bokeo, Oudomxai, Sayaboury, Luang Prabang, Houaphan, Xieng Khouang, Vientiane, Borikhan, Khammouane, and Savannakhet provinces; in Thailand, the Mong live in Mae Hong Sone, Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, Phayao, Nan, Tak, Phitsanulok, Phetchabun, and Bangkok provinces; in Myanmar, the Mong language is used in Shan State, Mandalay and in the Golden Triangle; in France, Mong language is used in Lyons, Toulouse, Marseille, Bordeaux, Paris; In French Guiana, Mong language is used in Cacao and Cayenne; in Australia, the Mong language is used in Tasmania and Melbourne; in Canada,
the Mong language is used in Kitchener and Toronto; in Germany, the Mong language is used in Gammertingen, Southern Germany; 200; in New Zealand, the Mong language is used in a family of 9 people; and in the United States, the Mong language is used in almost 50 states, the majority are in California, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and North Carolina as well as Oregon and Georgia.

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
N/A

3. MODALITY AND LINGUISTIC AFFILIATION

a) This language is: □ Signed    ✗ Spoken    □ Attested only in writings

b) Language family, if classified; origin, if artificially constructed:
 Under the Mong-Mien language family within the broader Sino-Tibetan language family of the world.

c) Closest language linguistically. For signed language, note influence from other signed or spoken languages:
N/A

4. LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND USE

a) What written literature, inscriptions or recordings exist in this language? Are there newspapers, radio or television broadcasts, etc.?:
 Due to the limitation of this form, we cannot insert the entire list of selected bibliography in here. An electronic version of selected bibliography is attached.

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 at this time. This is the rationale as to why we are requesting Ethnologue and SIL to assign a new language code for the Mong language, so the federal, state, and local government can recognize that Mong is a language that is being used in the United States and other countries around the world as mentioned on Item 2, C above.

c) Comment on factors of ethnolinguistic identity and informal domains of use:
 Our people have always identified ourselves as Mong, spelled “M-o-n-g.” We speak, read, and write in the Mong language. The term “Mong” was derived from the Mong spelling
word “Moob” (Mong) and it refers to the people as well as our language. In the 1950s, the Mong Romanized Popular Alphabet (RPA) writing system was created based on the Mong language and culture by Dr. George Lindwood Barney, a missionary who lived with the Mong and learned the Mong language. The Mong language has 55 consonantal phonemes, consisting of 16 single consonants, 21 double consonantal blends, 14 triple consonantal blends, 4 quadruple consonantal blends, 14 monophthongs, 5 diphthongs, and 8 tones.
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:
   We are Mong by birth; Mong is our heritage; and we speak, read, and write in the Mong language.

b) Knowledge through personal communication. Describe:
   We are Mong by birth; Mong is our heritage, and we speak, read, and write in the Mong language.

c) Knowledge from published sources. Include known dictionaries, grammars, etc. (please give complete bibliographical references):
   Due to the limitation of this form, we cannot insert the entire bibliographic reference in here. An electronic copy of bibliographic reference is attached.

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: