

# ISO 639-3 Registration Authority

## Request for Change to ISO 639-3 Language Code

Change Request Number: 2015-020 (completed by Registration authority)

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Postal address for primary contact person for this request (in general, email correspondence will be used):  
Dept of Anthropology, University at Albany, Albany, NY 12222 USA

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: zab

Associated reference name: Guelavía Zapotec

## 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: Western Tlacolula Valley Zapotec

Rationale for change:

Closely related Zapotec varieties are spoken in a number of towns in the western part of the Tlacolula District of Oaxaca, Mexico. These towns include San Juan Guelavía, Teotitlán del Valle, Santa Cruz Papalutla, San Juan Teitipac, San Lucas Quiaviní, San Jerónimo Tlacoachahuaya (or Tlacoachahuaya de Morelos), Santa Ana del Valle, and Tlacolula de Matamoros, Magdalena Teitipac, San Bartolomé Quialana, San Marcos Tlapazola, San Mateo Macuilxochitl, San Miguel del Valle, San Sebastián Abasolo, San Sebastián Teitipac, and Villa Díaz Ordaz.

Smith Stark (2007) refers to this variety of Zapotec as "zapoteco de Tlacolua occidental", and several recent publications (e.g. Lillehaugen 2006) also use this name.

The name Guelavía Zapotec is problematic since it artificially elevates the status of the variety spoken in San Juan Guelavía and then treats the varieties spoken in other towns as dialects of this variety. However, San Juan Guelavía is neither the largest town in the region nor the most politically influential. (Tlacolula de Matamoros serves as the cabecera of the district.)

Zapotec speakers who live in other towns in the Western Tlacolula district react with a mixture of scorn and incredulity to the idea that linguists classify their language as a dialect of the Guelavía variety. We also do not find the idea to be linguistically defensible.

Our understanding that the current name, Guelavía Zapotec, is a result of the decision to produce a New Testament translation (by Ted Jones and colleagues) in the variety spoken in San Juan Guelavía, and that Guelavía was chosen due to the high mutual intelligibility of its dialect in other nearby towns (England, Bartholomew, and Cruz Ramos 1983).

However, several other towns in the region are also producing written materials in their own Zapotec varieties. (Particularly noticeable are materials being produced in San Lucas Quiaviní). There is also substantial linguistic work including dictionaries, grammars, texts on the Teotitlán, San Lucas Quiaviní, Santa Ana del Valle, Tlacolula, and Tlacoachahuaya varieties. Thus the past thirty years have increasingly made the Guelavía variety only one of several varieties of Western Tlacolula Valley Zapotec to receive extensive documentation and research.

We recognize that Western Tlacolula Zapotec is already listed as an alternative name at <http://www.ethnologue.com/language/zab>. However, the current listing does not list all of the towns where this language is listed. We also argue that it would be more correct and intellectually defensible to shift the primary name for the zab language cluster to a geographic label that does not privilege the variety of one town over its neighbors and to retain Guelavía Zapotec as an alternate.

## **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:
- (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:
- Fieldwork on Santa Ana del Valle Zapotec (Broadwell); Fieldwork on San Lucas Quiaviní Zapotec (Munro, Lillehaugen); Fieldwork on

Tlacolula de Matamoros Zapotec and San Jerónimo Tlacoachahuaya  
Zapotec (Lillehaugen)

(b) Knowledge through personal communication. Describe:

- Knowledge from published sources (please give complete bibliographical references):
  - Egland, Steven; [Doris Bartholomew](#); and Saul Cruz Ramos. 1983 [1978]. *La inteligibilidad interdialectal en México: Resultados de algunos sondeos*. Mexico City: Instituto Lingüístico de Verano.
  - Esposito, Christina M. 2002. *Santa Ana del Valle Zapotec Phonation*. M.A. thesis, UCLA.
  - Galant, Michael R. 1998. *Comparative Constructions in Spanish and San Lucas Quiaviní Zapotec*. Ph.D. Dissertation, UCLA.
  - Jones, Ted E., and Ann D. Church. 1985. Personal pronouns in Guelavía Zapotec. *S.I.L.-Mexico Workpapers* 7: 1-15.
  - Jones, Ted E., and Lyle M. Knudson. 1977. "Guelavía Zapotec Phonemes". In *Studies in Otomanguean Phonology*, ed. William Merrifield, pp. 163-180. [Dallas-Arlington]: Summer Institute of Linguistics and University of Texas, Arlington.
  - Lee, Felicia A. 1999. Antisymmetry and the Syntax of San Lucas Quiaviní Zapotec. Ph.D. dissertation, UCLA.
  - Liga Bíblica, La [Jones, Ted, et al.]. 1995. *Xtiidx Dios Cun Ditsa (El Nuevo Testamento en el zapoteco de San Juan Guelavía y en español)*. n.p.: n.p.
  - Lillehaugen, Brook Danielle. 2003. *The Categorical Status of Body Part Prepositions in Valley Zapotec*. M.A. thesis, UCLA.
  - Lillehaugen, Brook Danielle. 2006. *Expressing Location in Tlacolula Valley Zapotec*. Ph.D. dissertation, UCLA.
  - Méndez [Martínez], Olivia V. 2000. Code-Switching and the Matrix Language Model in San Lucas Quiaviní Zapotec. M.A. thesis, UCLA.
  - [Munro, Pamela](#). 2002. "Hierarchical Pronouns in Discourse: Third Person Pronouns in San Lucas Quiaviní Zapotec Narratives". *Southwest Journal of Linguistics* 21: 37-66.
  - [Munro, Pamela](#). 2003. *Preserving the Language of the Valley Zapotecs: The Orthography Question*. Presented at Language and Immigration in France and the United States: Sociolinguistic Perspectives. University of Texas.
  - Munro, Pamela; Lillehaugen, Brook Danielle; and Felipe H. Lopez. 2007. *Cali chiu? A course in Valley Zapotec*. Lulu.com
  - [Munro, Pamela](#), and Felipe H. Lopez, with Olivia V. Méndez [Martínez], Rodrigo Garcia, and Michael R. Galant. 1999. *Di'csyonaary X:tè'e'n Di'i'zh Sah Sann Lu'uc (San Lucas Quiaviní Zapotec Dictionary / Diccionario Zapoteco de San Lucas Quiaviní)*. Los Angeles: (UCLA) Chicano Studies Research Center Publications.
  - Smith Stark, Thomas. 2007. Algunos isoglosas zapotecas. Clasificación de las lenguas indígenas de México: Memorias del III Coloquio Internacional del Lingüística Mauricio Swadesh, ed. Christina Buenrostro et al, pp. 69–134. Mexico City: UNAM y Instituto Nacional de Lenguas Indígenas.

## 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](mailto: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>