

ISO 639-3 Registration Authority

Request for Change to ISO 639-3 Language Code

Change Request Number: 2021-013 (completed by Registration authority)

Date: 22/02/2021

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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):
UMR 8163 Savoirs, textes, langage Université de Lille, site Pont de

bois, 3 rue du Barreau 59 650 VILLENEUVE D'ASCQ

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 (include here a request for a new code element for a divergent dialect of a major language)
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:

Associated reference name:

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:

(c) Rationale for change:

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, or the major language and the divergent variety (or varieties) for which a new code element is being requested:

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, or for requesting a separate identifier for the divergent variety:
- (c) Does the existing language code element 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.? 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, provided that sufficient information on the rationale is given in (b) above.

In the case of a minority language that has been considered in some contexts to be a dialect of a major language, yet is divergent enough to be unintelligible to speakers of the standard variety of the major language, it may be more beneficial for the users of the ISO 639-3 and 639-2 code sets to create a new code element for the divergent language variety without splitting the existing code element of the major language. The ISO 639-3 Registration Authority may make this determination when considering a request involving a major language and a highly distinct “dialect.” If such a course is followed, the rationale for the decision will be published in a comment by the Registration Authority on approval of the requested addition for the divergent variety.

6. Create a new language code element

(a) Name of missing language: Lalang Siny Seselwa

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:

LSS is the signed language used in the Seychelles. It has never been described before.

The lexicon listed in the dictionary currently is still a very basic lexicon, largely specific to LSF. It is based on conversations themes that relate to the direct experiences of the people it has met. The lexicon is derived from these interviews in a mode of self-presentation, lifestyle and experience.

The LSS lexicon is very different from the LSF lexicon for all the terms related to family, people, things of their surroundings, expressions of everyday life, abstract qualifiers, emotions, intentions, the numbering system.

Lot of LSS signs come from emblems specific to the Seychellois community.

Of course, LSS has many words that are still close to illustrative gestures, so the action verbs are transparent even to people who are not familiar with LSS.

But the intellectual activity verbs, which have a metaphorical motivation, differ from those in LSS. So are those that express intention.

Grammatically, I was able to identify differences with LSF. The construction of pointing signs shows differences compared to LSF. The same goes for predicative constructions or negatives.

I presented several LSS video-recorded documents to a good LSF signer (from a deaf family, LSF teacher), which he viewed once.

He easily understood the story of a person's ordinary day, which uses a lot of illustrative gestures, pointing and mimics, and produces a very linear speech.

But when faced with a less descriptive speech in LSS, the LSF speaker is quickly lost. He clearly lacks the terms of the standard lexicon, to identify what it is about, in spite of a partial understanding of the facts and the stated relations.

I also showed him a recording of a spontaneous discussion between 3 people, and in this case the French signer had even more difficulties to follow the discussion.

For everyday vocabulary, the Seychelles signers can recognize the words that come from the Reunionese LSF, because they are familiar with equivalent terms in use in their community. Example: girl / boy / . It is indeed the awareness of the existence of this lexicon specific to the Seychelles that led to the dictionary project. This awareness is perfectly expressed by Bennet, a deaf man from Seychelles, in a video recording.

He himself spent time in Paris as part of his teacher training, and the recordings made at the INJS during this stay show that in front of French deaf pupils he only used an illustrative register, the only one which guaranteed that these students would understand his words.

I especially note the carefulness of the signers in the Seychelles in front of a possible massive entry of LSF signs in LSS, much more than a possibility of considering LSS as a variant of LSF or LSCR.

I myself had to learn the LSS lexicon, and to do so, I had to memorize signs distinct from those of LSF, sometimes close, sometimes very different.

(b)

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:

During the project Development of Seychellois Sign Language, which ran from 2010 to 2017, founded by UNESCO and the Seychelles government. I had opportunity to stay on site three for three missions, in 2014, 2017 and 2019, where I met lot of signers in the aim to collect data, validate the analyses and present the dictionary. The dictionary is based on data collected by local signers from a large number of signers living in the major islands. I went to the school for the deaf, and I met also the director from the Creole Institute and the researchers from the Creole Culture Research group at the University of Seychelles

(b) Knowledge through personal communication. Describe:

(c) Knowledge from published sources (please give complete bibliographical references):

- Gendrot, M. & Gébert, A. (2010). Les projets de développement de la Langue des signes mauricienne (MSL) et de la Langue des signes seychelloise (SSL) [1]: Leur lien avec le pôle LSF de l'INJS de Paris. *La nouvelle revue de l'adaptation et de la scolarisation*, 49(1), 171-180. <https://doi.org/10.3917/nras.049.0171>
- Gendrot, M. (2016). Langue des signes et administration de la justice : le cas des Seychelles. *Éla. Études de linguistique appliquée*, 183(3), 343-353. <https://doi.org/10.3917/ela.183.0343>
- Risler, A. (2019) “Pointing gestures and personal references in Seychelles Sign Language and Creole Seychellois”, *Theoretical Issues in Signed Languages (TISLR)* 13, Hambourg, 25-27 septembre 2019, Poster
- Alain Gébert, Annie Risler. (2019) A dictionary and grammar of SEYCHELLOIS SIGN LANGUAGE A.P.H.I. Ed, Mahé. < [hal-02986623](https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-02986623) >

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>