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: 2021-08-27
Name of Primary Requester: J. Albert Bickford
E-mail address: albert_bickford at sil dot org

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

Associated Change request number: 2021-030
Tentative assignment of new identifier: dsz

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:
      Mardin Sign Language
   b) Autonym (self-name) for this language:
   c) Common alternate names and spellings of language, and any established abbreviations:
      MarSL
   d) Reason for preferred name:
      This is the name given to it by researchers in their publications about the language (see references). Members of the family refer to it by the Turkish expressions "dilsizce" ‘deaf language’ or "eski işaretler" ‘old signs’.
   e) Name and approximate population of ethnic group or community who use this language (complete individual language currently in use):
      Members of the Dilsiz family in Mardin, south-eastern Turkey. As of 2013, about 40 deaf and hearing users, most in their 60s or older.
   f) Preferred three letter identifier, if available: dsz or dlz

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
      X Nearly extinct/secondary use only (includes languages in revival)
      □ Recently extinct language
      □ Historical language
      □ Ancient language

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Artificially constructed language
□ Macrolanguage

(Select one. See explanations of these types at http://www.sil.org/iso639%2D3/types.asp)

For individual languages, also complete:

b) Countries where used:
   Turkey

c) Region within each country: towns, districts, states or provinces where used. Include GPS coordinates of the approximate center of the language, if possible:
   Mardin city, south-eastern Turkey, near the Syrian border, 37.34882972884986, 40.7346073923781

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:
      Isolate; arose independently without influence from other sign languages. Sign language > shared sign language.

   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:
      No genetic relationships. Some members of the family are bilingual in Turkish Sign Language [tsm]. Hearing members of the family are bilingual in the local spoken Arabic. Some evidence of influence from spoken Arabic, e.g. in some mouth shapes used in MarSL.

4. LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND USE
   a) What written literature, inscriptions or recordings exist in this language? Are there newspapers, radio or television broadcasts, etc.?:
      30 hours of video recordings in the Endangered Languages Archive
      https://www.elararchive.org/dk0134/. Research recordings and other language documentation noted in Zeshan and Dikyuva 2013:35.

   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?:

As far as I can tell from published sources, no government recognition and never any use in schools.

c) Comment on factors of ethno-linguistic identity and informal domains of use:
Most deaf members have moved away from Mardin, have learned Turkish Sign Language, and associate with the national Turkish Deaf community. Most fluent (deaf and hearing) users are in their 60s or older. Younger deaf members know only Turkish SL. MarSL is still used at family celebrations, such as weddings, but the main factor keeping it in use is the hearing people who have no incentive to learn Turkish SL.
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:

b) Knowledge through personal communication. Describe:

c) Knowledge from published sources. Include known dictionaries, grammars, etc. (please give complete bibliographical references):
see Request for Change….

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: