

ISO 639-3 Registration Authority

Request for Change to ISO 639-3 Language Code

Change Request Number: 2008-094 (completed by Registration authority)

Date: 2008-8-28

Primary Person submitting request: Dr. Paulette Hopple

Affiliation: SIL

E-mail address: paulette_hopple@sil.org

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

Jenvit Suknaphasawat Jenvit_Suk@sil.org

Postal address for primary contact person for this request (in general, email correspondence will be used):
PO Box 50, Mae Sai 57130 Thailand

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.

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
4. Split a language code element into two or more new code elements
5. 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: blr

Associated reference name: Blang

1. Modify an existing language code element

(a) What are you proposing to change:

- Language reference name
 Language additional names

- Language type (living, extinct, historical, etc.)
- Language scope (individual language or macrolanguage)

(b) What new value(s) do you propose: Plang

(c) Rationale for change:

To make clear that this is intended to designate the closely related languages of the Waic subfamily that are known to their own speakers as Plang, and should not be confused with the larger Chinese government designation of the Blang ethnicity, of which it is a part. (The Chinese pinyin spelling uses "b" for the voiceless unaspirated bilabial stop, but the "p" is in more common use among the Plang varieties that are pursuing development.)

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: The proposal is to change the scope of the present [blr] Blang to a macrolanguage and include three specific Plang languages (which are also being newly proposed)

- 1) Plang, Pang Pung, (Burma)
- 2) Plang, Kontoi (China)
- 3) Plang, Man Noi (China)

(b) Rationale for change:

Whereas Blang [blr] has in the past been employed as an individual language identifier, there are many Plang languages which are distinct and unintelligible for the purposes of spoken communication. Written communication of [blr] is not a factor in this macrolanguage. Most speakers of Plang recognize their language as Plang, as well as other unintelligible languages as also Plang. This self-identification across distinct languages supports the classification of Plang [blr] as a macro

Making the change to a macrolanguage will enable future ease of classification of the expected identification of new varieties of Plang and aligns the ISO designation with that currently in use among Mon-Khmer linguists.

A survey in 2005 of 16 Plang varieties in the Bulang area of Menghai district in Sipsongpanna region of Yunnan Province demonstrated a difference in comprehension of Pang Pung Plang from between 25-88%, with lexical similarity varying between 68-88%. Further study of other 3 varieties located in Burma during 2006-2007 indicates the existence of numerous varieties of Plang, the exact identification of which must await further study.

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") must also be submitted to fully document the scope 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.

This is a variety that is fully intelligible with another ISO 639-3 language and should be merged with it.

(b) If one of the latter two reasons, with which ISO 639-3 code element (identifier and name) should it be merged :

(c) Rationale for change:

4. 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.

5. 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:
Have worked on various dialects of Plang for over 15 years. Working currently with the Pang Pung Plang as an advisor on language development. Did language assessment as to the varieties of Plang and comprehension of Pang Pung Plang by other varieties in 2005. Continuing data collection and interviewing different dialect speakers of Plang.
- (b) Knowledge through personal communication. Describe:
- (c) Knowledge from published sources (please give complete bibliographical references):
Linguistic Publications and Manuscripts

Block, Karen L. 1994. Discourse grammar of first person narrative in Plang. M.A. thesis. University of Texas at Arlington. xii, 168 p.

Block, Karen L. 1994. "Storyline features in Plang First Person narratives." SEALS Paper presented at the 4th SEALS conference in BKK & CM Unpublished ms.

Block, Karen L. 1996. "What makes a story a story in Plang?." Mon-Khmer Studies 26: 357-85.

Diffloth, Gerard. 1980. The Wa languages. Linguistics of the Tibeto-Burman Area, 5.2.

Diffloth, Gerard. 1982. Subclassification of Palaungic and notes on "P'uman". Paper presented at the 15th Sino-Tibetan Conference on Languages and Linguistics. Beijing.

Dissawarotham, Phijitra. 1986. The phonology of Plang as spoken in Baan Huay Nam Khun, MA Thesis. Mahidol University.

- Hopple, Paulette 1997b. Correlates of Register in Plang Vowels (Kontoi) Unpublished ms.
- Hopple, Paulette & Debbie Paulsen 1987. Pangloh Lexicon - Sorted by Initials with Diffloth's Proto-forms. Unpublished ms.
- Hopple, Paulette & Debbie Paulsen 1988a. Phonology of Plang. (Kontoi) Unpublished ms.
- Hopple, Paulette & Debbie Paulsen 1988b. A phonemic outline of Plang (Kontoi) and Samtao (Pangloh). Unpublished ms.
- Hopple, Paulette & Debbie Paulsen 1988c. (A picture dictionary of Thai-N.Khmer-Plang-English.) [Dictionary] Unpublished ms
- Hopple, Paulette & Debbie Paulsen 1988d. Plang (Kontoi) Rhyme Book. Unpublished ms
- Hopple, Paulette & Debbie Paulsen 1988e. Pangloh (Samtao) Rhyme Book. Unpublished ms
- Hopple, Paulette & Debbie Paulsen 1988f. Singting (Plang) Tones - Tonal Variants - Data Lists. Unpublished ms
- Li Dao Yong, Nye His Jen, Chyou Eh Feng. 1986. Sketch of the Bulang Language (Chinese) Beijing: Minorities Publishing House.
- Paulsen, Debbie 1987a. Pangloh Phonology. Unpublished ms.
- Paulsen, Debbie 1987b. Pangloh- Tonal Variants - Data Lists. Unpublished ms
- Paulsen, Debbie Lynn. 1989. A phonological reconstruction of proto-Plang. M.A. thesis. University of Texas at Arlington. viii, 118 p.
- Paulsen, Debbie 1991. "Tone and Intonation in Plang." Presented at the 24 Sino-Tibetan Conference, Bangkok 1991
- Paulsen, Debbie 1992. A Preliminary Peek and Plang Particles PYU Research and Development Institute Report.
- Paulsen, Debbie. 1992. "A phonological reconstruction of Proto-Plang." Mon-Khmer Studies 18-19: 160-222
- Paulsen, Debbie. 1996. "Phonology in Plang." PYU Working Papers in Linguistics 1: 126-42.
- Paulsen, Debbie. 1996. "Tone and intonation in Plang." PYU Working Papers in Linguistics 1: 53-65.
- Paulsen, Debbie, Paulette Hopple, & Ting Rew. 1990 Plang - English Lexicon [Dictionary] 43p. Unpublished ms

Cultural & Historical

Bulang zu diao cha zu and Tan, Xiaojian. 2001. Bulang practice of Hinnayan Buddhism (Bulang zu : Menghai Bulangshan Xiang Xinman'e Cun / Bulang zu diao cha zu bian xie ; gu wen Yan Wennan, Zhou Haili ; fen ce zhu bian Tan Xiaojian.) (Chinese) [Kunming] : Yunnan da xue chu ban she.

Hopple, Paulette 1987. The 'original' location of the Plang (Kontoi dialect) in China. Unpublished ms.

Unseth, Peter and Paulette Hopple (2005 in preparation) Gender and scripts: women's role in script innovation for vernacular literacy. In Women as readers, writers, and leaders, edited by Pat Kelley. Dallas: SIL International.

The change proposal process

A request to change the code set goes through a five 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 (ordinarily October 1st), 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) amended and resubmitted for the next review cycle, or 4) withdrawn from consideration. 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>