

# 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: 2009-6-29

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

Associated Change request number : 2009-037

(completed by Registration Authority)

Tentative assignment of new identifier : yan

(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:  
[sum]
- b) Autonym (self-name) for this language:  
Mayangna
- c) Common alternate names and spellings of language, and any established abbreviations:  
Sumu
- d) Reason for preferred name:  
I copy Dr. Offen: "Sumu is a Miskitu term meaning "dumb one" and was first ascribed to the Ulwa by the Tawira in the late eighteenth century and, later, applied to all Sumu Indians. The Sumu of today reject this term and use their own word, Mayangna, which means "us" or "we people." Lehmann heard this term as a Sumu self-ascriptor in the early twentieth century, but he consciously decided not to introduce the word into the literature; Walter Lehmann, "Ergebnisse einer Forschungsreise in Mittelamerika und Mexico Zeitschrift fur Ethnologie." [See endnote 24 of the attached paper by Dr. Offen.]; and (2) Houwald says "Today the Sumu prefer to be called Mayangna, name that probably is the older and that they give to themselves" (see reference).
- e) Name and approximate population of ethnic group or community who use this language (complete individual language currently in use):  
Ethnic population according to Nicaragua 2005 census: 9,756.
- f) Preferred three letter identifier, if available: [sum]

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
- |                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Living language   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Nearly extinct/secondary use only (includes languages in revival) |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Recently extinct language   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Historical language   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Ancient language  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Artificially constructed language                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | 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:  
Nicaragua and Honduras

- c) Region within each country: towns, districts, states or provinces where used. Include GPS coordinates of the approximate center of the language, if possible:  
There are three dialects; Twahka spoken in Honduras between rivers Patuca and Wanki, while the Panamahka lives in villages in the RAAN (Autonomous Region of the North Atlantic), Nicaragua along the river Waspuk, Bambana, Tungi, Santo Tomás de Umbra, the upper Wawa and along some stretches of Wanki River; and the Tuahka is the minority dialectal variant of Mayangna spoken by some 1,000 people around the area of Wasakin, near Rosita, RAAN (see Benedicto and Hale, 2001 for an overview of its morphological properties). It is more endangered than its counterpart Panamahka.

- 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:  
Misumalpan, Sumu
- 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:  
Ulwa

#### 4. LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND USE

- a) What written literature, inscriptions or recordings exist in this language? Are there newspapers, radio or television broadcasts, etc.?:  
No
- 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?:  
Yes. The Nicaraguan 2005 census list it as Sumu-Mayangna. It is not taught at schools.
- c) Comment on factors of ethnolinguistic identity and informal domains of use:

#### 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):  
(1) Breve Vocabulario Twahka. 1996. CIDCA, MIT, UMass;  
(2) Elena Benedicto, Modesta Dolores, Melba McLean, Fieldwork as A Participatory Research Activity: The Mayangna Linguistic Teams. Purdue University, URACCAN, CIDCA;  
(3) The Mayangna (Panamahka) Dictionary (CIDCA 1995), compiled by Melba McClean;  
(4) "Twahka: A Neglected Dialect". Paper presented at the 1996 SSILA (Society for the Study of Indigenous Languages) meeting [with M. Dickey and K. Hale]; Robb Tylor, Deborah, The Times & Life of Bluefields: An Intergenerational dialogue, Managua: Academia de Geografía e historia, 2005;  
(5) McSweeney, Kendra, A demographic profile of the Tawahka Amerindians of Honduras, The Geographical Review, July 1, 2002.

#### 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/default.asp>  
Email: [iso639-3@sil.org](mailto: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:**

Gordon, Raymond G., Jr. (ed.), 2005. Ethnologue: Languages of the World, Fifteenth edition. Dallas, Tex.: SIL International. Online version: <http://www.ethnologue.com/> .

LinguistList. Ancient and Extinct Languages. <http://linguistlist.org/forms/langs/GetListOfAncientLgs.html>

LinguistList. Constructed Languages. <http://linguistlist.org/forms/langs/GetListOfConstructedLgs.html>