

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: 2009-5-15

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Associated Change request number : 2009-047

(completed by Registration Authority)

Tentative assignment of new identifier : jls

(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:
Jamaican Sign Language
- b) Autonym (self-name) for this language:
Jamaican Sign Language
- c) Common alternate names and spellings of language, and any established abbreviations:
Jamaica Sign Language, JSL
- d) Reason for preferred name:
Name used by the national deaf association, name used by native speakers of this language
- e) Name and approximate population of ethnic group or community who use this language (complete individual language currently in use):
Jamaican Deaf Community, Population: approximately 27,000
- f) Preferred three letter identifier, if available: jls

Your suggestion will be taken into account, but the Registration Authority will determine the identifier to be proposed. The identifier 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
 Nearly extinct/secondary use only (includes languages in revival)
 Recently extinct language
 Historical language
 Ancient language

- 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:
Jamaica
- c) Region within each country: towns, districts, states or provinces where used. Include GPS coordinates of the approximate center of the language, if possible:
Throughout Jamaica
- 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:
Deaf 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:
American Sign Language and English

4. LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND USE

- a) What written literature, inscriptions or recordings exist in this language? Are there newspapers, radio or television broadcasts, etc.?:
At present, there are no distributed recorded literature in Jamaican Sign Language. There is possibly one copy of a JSL book but the publisher lost the remaining copies. Also, there is some sort of ABC book available--but it is uncertain if this is in JSL or some other language. Most of the sign language materials used in Jamaica are in American Sign Language (ASL). There are no newspapers, radio, or television broadcasts serving the deaf community.
- 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?:
The Ministry of Education cooperates with the Jamaica Association for the Deaf to promote bilingual education in the eight government-sponsored schools. These schools are moving toward bilingual education in using both written English and JSL in the classrooms. The

remaining deaf educational institutions in Jamaica use ASL, Signed English, and/or Jamaican Sign Language. The Deaf community in Jamaica uses JSL in their churches and social gatherings.

- c) Comment on factors of ethnolinguistic identity and informal domains of use:

The Jamaican Deaf population is very proud of JSL and consider it a language distinctive to their unique culture and community. Though several members of the deaf community consider JSL and ASL to be similar, there is still a distinctive language pride associated with JSL use. ASL is used in several deaf schools and with deaf Americans as many visit Jamaica and many Jamaican deaf people travel to America. There is also some historical influence from British Sign Language as this language was introduced to the Jamaican deaf community in 1939 and early staffing of the government-sponsored schools came from British sources. However, most deaf Jamaicans nowadays do not demonstrate proficiency in British Sign Language. Deaf people generally learn JSL from school and deaf family members. They continue their use of JSL at their churches, social gatherings, and deaf clubs. Many deaf Jamaicans desire for JSL to be recognized more by the hearing community, the use of JSL to be standardized and want to see a JSL dictionary developed.

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):

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
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>