ISO 639-3 Registration Authority
Request for Change to ISO 639-3 Language Code

Change Request Number: 2021-001 (completed by Registration authority)

Date: 2019-9-29

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Postal address for primary contact person for this request (in general, email correspondence will be used):
Koningin Wilhelminakade 205, 1972 GK IJmuiden, THE NETHERLANDS

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
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_NewCode RequestForm.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:

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.

6. Create a new language code element

(a) Name of missing language: Interslavic

(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:
Interslavic has a high degree of mutual intercomprehensibility with all Slavic languages, but cannot be linked to any such language in particular. It is essentially a modernized continuation of Old Church Slavonic, but not more similar to it as for example Interlingua is to Classical Latin.

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:
The history of the Interslavic language starts in the 17th century with the works of Juraj Križanić, a Croatian priest who worked in Russia and wrote the first Interslavic grammar. Later efforts at describing the same language were made during the 19th and 20th centuries, mostly by Czech, Slovenian and Croatian authors, including Ján Herkeľ, Matija Majar-Ziljski, Božidar Raič, Ignac Hošek and Ladislav Podmele. Most of these language projects were elaborate and used in various publications. Although they were isolated efforts by individual people, their differences are too minimal to consider them separate languages.
In the 21th century, the idea was revived, which resulted in two new collaborative projects: Slovianski (2006) and Neoslavonic (2009). Initially, they worked together under the name Interslavic, and in 2011 a common standard was established under the same name, incorporating the material of both projects, as well as several historical projects. The last remaining differences were eliminated in 2017. The language is currently being managed by a commission of five people.

Interslavic has a user community consisting of a Facebook group with ca. 5000 members (the largest user community of any constructed language but Esperanto) and a few other other groups and forums amounting for another 1000 members. Although precise numbers about the actual number of speakers are hard to give, we know for sure that Interslavic has several hundreds of proficient users, including several dozens of people who can speak it fluently. We have no data about native speakers, but since Interslavic is primarily a constructed language, its primary purpose is to serve as an additional auxiliary language,

to be learned anew by each new generation. Although we cannot exclude that there are parents who speak Interslavic with their children, this would be a side effect rather than the purpose of the language.

This purpose can be defined as one-way communication with Slavs of different nationalities, who can understand it without prior knowledge. Thus, Interslavic is not only the main language of written communication within the aforementioned Internet groups, it is used in a variety of other fields as well. For example, it is used in hotels and other touristic locations with many Slavic visitors, and there are plans to use Interslavic for the development of e-democracy applications in Central and Eastern Europe. Interslavic is used on various websites, including a news site and a wiki, as well as several private and commercial websites. Interslavic has an extensive and continuously growing text corpus, including a few books. It is the main language of the scientific journal "Slovjani.info" (published every six months since 2016), included in the CEEOL database and regularly archived by the National Library of the Czech Republic. Another scientific journal, "Ethnoentomology", provides its articles with abstracts in Interslavic.

Interslavic is used in oral communication as well. Conferences on the Interslavic Language (CISLa) have taken place in the Czech Republic in 2017, 2018 and 2019, each of them with 60-70 participants from various countries (presentations where either held in Interslavic or translated consecutively by an interpreter). Furthermore, Interslavic has been for school exchanges as part of the "Slavic Cultural Diplomacy" programme. In 2019, Interslavic was featured as the main language of Václav Marhoul's film "The Painted Bird", the Czech candidate for the 2020 Oscar nominations for the Best International Movie.

Textbooks have been published in English, Russian, Czech and Chinese, and there are bidirectional dictionaries with English, Polish, Russian and Serbian. Interslavic has been subject of various research, including dissertatations and theses. The language has been presented at international conferences in Poland, Russia, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Montengro, Spain, Portugal, Greece, Great Britain and the Netherlands. Courses and workshops have been given at various universities (including Prague, Bratislava, Łódź).

(b) Knowledge through personal communication. Describe:

(c) Knowledge from published sources (please give complete bibliographical references):
Internet resources:
- <http://steen.free.fr/interslavic> - Main page, featuring grammar, online dictionaries, history, spell checker, transliterator, bibliography, etc.
- <http://www.interslavic-language.org> - Interslavic language portal
- <http://www.neoslavonic.org/> - Interslavic language tutorial
- <http://slovjani.info/> - Scientific journal "Slovjani.info"
- <http://izvesti.info/> - News site
- <http://conference.interslavic-language.org/> - The CISLa conferences
- <https://www.ceeol.com/search/journal-detail?id=1890> - CEEOL database
- <https://www.ceeol.com/search/book-detail?id=790561> - Čitateljnik (Interslavic reading book)
- <http://www.facebook.com/groups/interslavic/> - Interslavic Facebook group
- <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interslavic_language> - Wikipedia article about Interslavic

(altogether, articles about Interslavic can be found in 55 different language editions)

Printed resources (books and theses, after 2006):
- Vojtěch Merunka: Interslavic zonal constructed language - an introduction for English speakers. Lukáš Lhoťan publishing, Prague 2018, ISBN 978-80-904932-7-8).
- Войтех Мерунка: Междуславянский искусственный зональный язык: Учебное пособие для русскоязычных (Voronež: Кварта, 2018, ISBN 978-80-907004-9-9).
- Vojtěch Merunka: Neoslavonic zonal constructed language (České Budějovice, 2012, ISBN 978-80-7453-291-7).
- Anna-Maria Meyer: Wiederbelebung einer Utopie. Probleme und Perspektiven slavischer Plansprachen im Zeitalter des Internets (Bamberger Beiträge zur Linguistik 6) (Bamberg: Univ. of Bamberg Press, 2014, ISBN 978-3-86309-233-7).
- Simona Ondicová: Hledání všeslovanského jazyka. Diplomová práce (Masarykova Univerzita, Brno, 2012).
- Jan van Steenbergen, Vojtěch Merunka: Čitateljnik medžuslovjanskogo jezyka - Antologija tekstov (2018, E-ISBN-13: 978-80-907004-7-5, Print-ISBN-13: 978-80-263-1407-3)
- Maria Vagner (Klementyeva), Medžuslovjanski jezyk (Меджусловјански језык). Interslavic language (bachelor's thesis) (Praha 2017).

Printed resources (articles in the scientific press, after 2006):
 - Věra Barandovská-Frank, "Lingvopolitiko kaj interslavismo de Ladislav Podmele". In: Grundlagenstudien aus Kybernetik und Geisteswissenschaft, nr. 54:4, December 2013, Akademia Libroservo, ISSN 0723-4899, pp. 176-189.
- Věra Barandovská-Frank, "Panslawische Variationen". In: Cyril Brosch & Sabine Fiedler eds., Florilegium Interlinguisticum. Festschrift für Detlev Blanke zum 70. Geburtstag (Peter Lang Internationaler Verlag der Wissenschaften, Frankfurt am Main, 2011, ISBN 978-3-631-61328-3), pp. 209-236.
- Věra Barandovská, "Slava interlingvistiko". In: Slovanská Unie, no. 2:1 (May 2017), ISSN 2464-756X, ISSN 2464-7578, pp. 33-37.
- Aleksandr D. Duličenko, "Pravigo de la slava interlingvistiko: slava reciprokeco kaj tutslava lingvo en la historio de Slavoj". In: Grundlagenstudien aus Kybernetik und Geisteswissenschaft, nr. 57:2, June 2016, Akademia Libroservo, ISSN 0723-4899, pp. 75-101.
- М.И. Исаев, Словарь этнолингистическиж понятий и терминов (Москва, 2001), pp. 85-86.
- Лина Йорданова et al., "Как ние българите разбираме Новославянския език без обучение и на латиница?". In: Slovanská Unie, no. 2:1 (May 2017), ISSN 2464-756X, ISSN 2464-7578, pp. 54-59.
- Katarzyna Knapik-Gawin, "„Nowe" i „stare" języki słowiańskie – ewolucja slawistycznych klasyfikacji w ciągu ostatniego 20-lecia". In: Jan Vorel et al., Slavica iuvenum XII. Mezinárodní setkání mladých slavistů pořádané pod záštitou Slavistické společnosti Franka Wollmana, vyd. 1 (Ostravská univerzita v Ostravě, Ostrava, 2011, ISBN 978-80-7368-637-6), pp. 80-85.
- Maria Kocór, Lina Yordanova, Jan van Steenbergen, Vojtěch Merunka: "Zonal Constructed Language and Education Support of e-Democracy – The Interslavic Experience". In: Sokratis K. Katsikas & Vasilios Zorkadis (eds.), E-Democracy – Privacy-Preserving, Secure, Intelligent E-Government Services. 7th International Conference, E-Democracy 2017, Athens, Greece, December 14-15, 2017, Proceedings (Communications in Computer and Information Science no. 792,Springer International Publishing, 2017,

ISBN (print) 978-3-319-71116-4, (electronic) 978-3-319-71117-1), pp. 15-30.
- Nikolay Kuznetsov, "The Interslavic Language: Way of Communication Among the Slavic Nations and Ethnic Groups". In: Journal of Ethnophilosophical Questions and Global Ethics, 2 (2018) no. 1, pp. 18–28.
- Roberto Lombino, Mezislovanský jazyk a jeho srozumitelnost pro členy jednotlivých slovanských národů (závěrečená ročníková práce Gymnázium Na Zatlance, Praha, 2016).
- Vojtěch Merunka, "Koriščenje medžuslovjanskogo jezyka v filmu Kolorovana ptica" (Use of Interslavic in film Painted Bird). In: Slovjani.info 3/1, May 2018, ISSN 2570-7108 (print), ISSN 2570-7116 (on-line), , pp. 69-75.
- Vojtěch Merunka, Emil Heršak, Martin Molhanec, "Neoslavonic Language". In: Grundlagenstudien aus Kybernetik und Geisteswissenschaft, nr. 57:2, June 2016, Akademia Libroservo, ISSN 0723-4899, pp. 114-134.
- Vojtěch Merunka, Martin Molhanec, "Neoslavonic Language Zonal language constructing: Challenge, experience, opportunity to the 21st century". In: 2nd International Conference on Education, Language, Art and Intercultural Communication (ICELAIC 2015) (Kaifeng, Henan, China: The International Science and Culture Center for Academic Contacts (ISCCAC), 2016, ISSN 2352-5398. ISBN 978-94-6252-152-0), pp. 227-233.
- В. Мерунка, "Новословѣнский зональный язык". In: Ковалев Г.Ф. et al., Славянскій вѣстникъ. История и перспективы (Jubilee print, Voronezh 2016, ISBN 978-5-89609-340-XX), pp. 192-198.
- Vojtěch Merunka, "Prva medžunarodna lingvistična konferencija o medžuslověnskom jezyku CISLa 2017". In: Slovanská Unie, no. 2:1 (May 2017), ISSN 2464-756X, ISSN 2464-7578, pp. 22-23.
- Vojtěch Merunka, "Slověnska kulturna diplomacija. SWOT analyza, strategija i taktika do budučnosti". In: Slovanská Unie, no. 1:1 (May 2016), ISSN 2464-756X, ISSN 2464-7578, pp. 36-46.
- Anna-Maria Meyer, "Slavic constructed languages in the internet age". In: Language Problems & Language Planning, Volume 40, Number 3 (January 2016), pp. 287-315(29).
- Anna-Maria Meyer, "Slavische Plansprachen auf dem Weg ins 21. Jahrhundert". In: Valérie Henzen, Anna Hodel, Sophia Polek eds., junOST : Beiträge zur ersten Schweizerischen Konferenz Junger Slavistinnen und Slavisten (Zürich, 2014, ISBN 978-3-290-22029-7), pp. 394-409.
- Martin Molhanec, Vojtěch Merunka, Emil Heršak, "Ontology-Based Translation of the Fusion Free Word Order Languages - Neoslavonic Example". In: Robert Pergl et al. eds., Enterprise and Organizational Modeling and Simulation: 12th International Workshop, EOMAS 2016, Held at CAiSE 2016, Ljubljana, Slovenia, June 13, 2016, Selected Papers (Springer International Publishing, 2016), pp. 139-154.
- Александр Пиперски, Конструирование языков: От эсперанто до дотракийского (Альпина нон-фикшн, Москва, 2017), ISBN 978-5-9614-4520-6, pp. 181–184.
- Л.П. Рупосова, "История межславянского языка". In: Вестник Московского государственного областного университета (Московский государственный областной университет, 2012 no. 1, pp. 51-56.
- Дора Солакова, "Съвременни опити за създаване на изкуствен общославянски език". In: Езиков свят – Orbis Linguarum, Issue no.2/2010 (Югозападен Университет "Неофит Рилски". Blagoevgrad, 2010, ISSN 1312-0484), pp. 246-251.
- Jan van Steenbergen, "Constructed Slavic languages in the 21th century". In: Grundlagenstudien aus Kybernetik und Geisteswissenschaft, nr. 57:2, June 2016. Akademia Libroservo, ISSN 0723-4899, pp. 102-113.
- Jan van Steenbergen, ""Język międzysłowiański jako lingua franca dla Europy Środkowej". In: Ilona Koutny, Ida Stria (eds.), Język / Komunikacja / Informacja nr XIII (2018). Poznań: Wydawnictwo Rys, 2018. ISBN 978-83-65483-72-0, ISSN 1896-9585, pp.

47–61.
- Jan van Steenbergen, "Pravopisanje medžuslovjanskogo języka". In: Slovanská Unie, no. 2:1 (May 2017), ISSN 2464-756X, ISSN 2464-7578, pp. 24-32.
- Jan van Steenbergen, "Slava lingvokonstruado en la 21-a jarcento". In: Stanislav Košecký (ed.), Prilingve en Nitro: politike, historie, teorie, instrue. Fakaj prelegoj prezentitaj kadre de la 101-a Universala Kongreso de Esperanto. (UEA, Rotterdam, 2016, ISBN 978-92-9017-130-0), pp. 105-115.
- Jan van Steenbergen, Vojtěch Merunka, "The Interslavic Language: An Opportunity for the Tourist Branch". In: Verda Canbey-Özgüler, Saye Nihan Çabuk, Aydın Zibel (eds.), International Symposium on Advancements in Tourism, Recreation and Sports Sciences. Montenegro, 5th-8th September 2018. Proceedings Book (GSI Publications, Podgorica, 2018), ISBN 978-605-81246-3-9, pp. 164–175.
- Erik Tihelka, "Interslavic: a new option for scientific publishing?". In: European Science Editing no. 44(3), August 2018, p. 62.

A more complete list of publications about Interslavic, including over a hundred articles in newspapers and magazines, can be found here:
<http://steen.free.fr/interslavic/publications.html>.

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

Appendix to the request for an ISO 639-3 code for Interslavic

Interslavic is a so-called zonal constructed language, intended to be intelligible to any speaker of a Slavic language without prior learning. It has a history of over 400 years and one of the largest user communities of all constructed languages. It has been broadly discussed in scientific and non-scientific literature, is used in a variety of different fields and is sufficiently unique for it not to be a variety of any other language. In spite of that, two earlier requests for a code [isv] have been rejected.

The first request was submitted in 2012 and was rejected *"because evidence has not been presented showing Interslavic to be a single language. The supporting documentation for the request includes both historical varieties and material on two or three recently created interlanguages [...]. There is no single language variety represented by the references."*[1]

At different moments in history, different authors have attempted to establish a standard for one and the same language, usually using a descriptive name (Slavic, Pan-Slavic, Inter-Slavic, Neoslavonic, etc.). These projects are based on the same material and intended to serve the same purpose. As a result, they are nearly identical and mutually fully understandable. Minor differences in grammar, for example regarding the use of a dual number, a vocative or athematic nouns, are a matter of taste rather than inalienable components of a project and have no impact on the intelligibility of a written text whatsoever. The biggest differences are not even between the varieties themselves, but between their written representations. Of course, Juraj Križanić's Interslavic from the 17th century looks different from today's Interslavic, but not more than, say, Polish in the age of Jan Kochanowski differs from modern Polish. Therefore, these projects are indisputably varieties of a single language according to SIL's definition of individual languages.[2] The only thinkable argument for treating them as separate languages would be the interlinguistic maxim that constructed languages can only have one standard that automatically invalidates all others, so that a similar project by a different author automatically becomes a separate language. This approach, however, is not based on linguistic criteria and conflicts with the registrar's choice to assess Interslavic as a natural language.

In a second application, submitted in 2014, Interslavic was limited to the modern version. This request, however, was turned down as well, because the language *"does not have a well-developed or long history. [...] Although it is being taught in a few places, there is not yet a substantial literature or user community or intergenerational transmission of the language. [...] Should it continue to develop standardization and literature and users, with evidence of being passed to another generation, it can be resubmitted for a code."*[3]

Given the above, it cannot be said that Interslavic "does not have a well-developed or long history": the first Interslavic text goes back to 1583, when the Croatian priest Šime Budinić translated works of Petrus Canisius into what he called *Slovignsky*, and the first Interslavic grammar was completed in 1666 by Juraj Križanić. Thus, Interslavic is probably the oldest international auxiliary language in existence. Of course, its history is not one of unbroken, continuous development. Most historical proposals were created independently from each other, and there is no direct link between them. Nevertheless, today's Interslavic did not start in a void: it draws unambiguously from previous projects and its authors explicitly call it a continuation of the latter. That continuous development is not a hard condition for an ISO 639-3 code is demonstrated not only by *Revived Cornish*, but also but by the fact that SIL International assigned a code to *Interglossa*, a sketch from 1943, but not to *Glosa*, which developed it into a full language in the years 1972–1992.

It should be noted that in both change requests, Interslavic was explicitly presented as a "constructed language", but in both cases the registrar treated it as a Slavic language of Eastern Europe instead and judged it as such. Paradoxically, had it done otherwise, Interslavic would probably have passed easily.

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[1]   https://iso639-3.sil.org/sites/iso639-3/files/change_requests/2012/CR_Comments_2012-146.pdf [access: 24 Dec. 2018]

[2]   Exceptions are schematic languages that have Slavic words but use a grammar that is not based on Slavic at all, such as *Neposlava*, *Slovanština* and *Slovio*.

[3]   https://iso639-3.sil.org/sites/iso639-3/files/change_requests/2014/CR_Comments_2014-053.pdf [access: 24 Dec. 2018]

Interslavic belongs to a grey area between constructed and natural languages. Among the former we find *Klingon* and *Quenya*, which are entirely the fruit of their authors' imagination, but also *Interlingua*, a kind of modernised and simplified Latin without artificial elements. Natural languages, on the other hand, contain various expressions of linguistic creativity as well. Especially standardized literary languages and revived languages involve a lot of top-down engineering, and some of them (f. ex. *Nynorsk*, *Modern Hebrew, Katharevousa Greek, Rumantsch Grischun*) can even be attributed to a single author. An interesting case is also *Revived Cornish*, a mix of modernised elements from Middle Cornish, reconstructions based on related languages and newly invented material.

Before the 20th century, authors of Pan-Slavic language projects never considered their work artificial or even new: all Slavic languages, they believed, were dialects of a heterogeneous Pan-Slavic language, and to provide it with a common literary standard, they simply had to adapt Old Church Slavonic to contemporary needs. This was not a creative process, but a matter of analysis and comparison, similar to the process of reviving Cornish or establishing a common standard for a group of dialects rather than to the process of creating a new language like Esperanto.

Because improvised forms of Interslavic have existed among Slavs of different nationalities for centuries, it has been qualified as a pidgin language as well.[4] Although this assertion is clearly wrong (pidgins are naive languages that appear spontaneously against the background of heterogeneous languages), it does not preclude the possibility of treating Interslavic as a *koine* language, the latter being based on two or more mutually intelligible languages or dialects. In this context, Ladislav Podmele spoke of "unscientific jargon" vis-à-vis "the scientific synthesis of all common elements and structures" of the Slavic languages, both of which he considered expressions of the same language.[5]

The aforementioned approaches put Interslavic on the natural side of the scale, but Interslavic meets the defining criteria of a constructed language as well. All forms of written Interslavic, both past and present, are the work of individuals or small groups. Interslavic was created with the purpose of being intelligible to Slavs of any nationality, but it was never intended to replace anyone's native language. Its written form has always taken precedence over its spoken form, a feature typical for constructed languages. And at last, because all Slavic languages have well-established standards nowadays, it can no longer be said that it unites a group of dialects.

Although the dichotomy between natural and constructed languages is not the most fortunate one, the introduction of a third category of semi-constructed languages would only lead to two grey areas instead of one. For the lack of a better solution, we will have to accept that according to modern criteria, Interslavic has all the characteristics of a constructed language, which is also how the authors of modern Interslavic have presented it from the very beginning. If an artificially modernized Latin like *Interlingua* is a constructed language, wouldn't it be logical for an artificially modernised Old Church Slavonic to belong to the same category?

For this reason, it is unreasonable to demand "intergenerational transmission", a requirement that no constructed language but *Esperanto* can meet. In fact, the very absence of such transmission is one of the main factors that distinguish a constructed language from a natural language: the former serves by definition as an additional language that is learned anew by each generation.

The Registration Authority also mentions a lack of standardisation, which is remarkable, since there is no policy to support this argument. ISO 639-3 contains countless languages that never met standardisation. The only valid argument for not including a non-standardised language would be that it is a variety of another language. Interslavic, however, is not a variety of any language in particular. The only potential candidate, *Old Church Slavonic*, has not undergone any changes after the 9th century. For comparison, Old English (450–1100), Middle English (1100–1500) and Modern English (after 1500) have three separate codes.

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[4]   Maria Vagner, *Medžuslovjanski jezyk (Међжусловјански језык). Interslavic language (bakalářská práce)*. Praha, Univerzita Karlova, Filozofická fakulta, Ústav bohemistických studií, 2017, str. 36.
[5]   Ladislav Podmele, "Revolucija v istoriji interlingvistiki" (1950s). Published in: Věra Barandovská-Frank, "Lingvopolitiko kaj interslavismo de Ladislav Podmele". In: *Grundlagenstudien aus Kybernetik und Geisteswissenschaft*, nr. 54:4, December 2013, Akademia Libroservo, ISSN 0723-4899, pp. 176-189.

Besides, it is not true that Interslavic lacks standardisation. At the time of both change requests, there were no less than two standards: *Interslavic (Medžuslovjanski)* and *Neoslavonic (Novoslověnsky)*. Even before their merger in 2017, differences between them were too minimal to even call them dialects, and most users mixed elements from both of them. Even so, having multiple standards is not a disqualifying factor, as is demonstrated by examples like English, Rusyn and Silesian.

Another argument used by the Registration Authority is that *"there is not yet a substantial literature or user community"*. The Interslavic text corpus is less extensive as *Esperanto*'s, but definitely larger than that of most other constructed languages currently included in the ISO 639-3 standard. Already in the 17th century Juraj Križanić wrote books and other texts in Interslavic, including his magnum opus (later known as *Politika*). Matija Majar-Ziljski used his *Uzajemny pravopis slavjanski* for a grammar of the language itself, for a book about St. Cyril and St. Method and for a magazine he published in the years 1873–1875, *Slavjan*. Other authors, like Božidar Raič and Ladislav Podmele, wrote in Interslavic as well. Among more recent publications are a translation of Antoine de St. Exupéry's *Little Prince* and a 100 page Interslavic reader, containing 31 texts by 15 different authors.[6] A collection of texts can also be found on the website *Vikisbornik*. Furthermore, Interslavic has had a news portal from 2007 onwards, called *Slovianska Gazeta* (2007–2011) and *Izvesti.info* (since 2011), and since 2016 a scientific journal appears that is predominantly written in Interslavic, *Slovjani.info.* Another scientific journal, *Ethnoentomology*, provides its articles with abstracts in Interslavic, which makes Interslavic the second international auxiliary language after *Interlingua* that is used for abstracts in a scientific paper.[7]

As for Interslavic's userbase, Ivan G. Iliev wrote in 2012 that *Slovianski* (the name of the project before 2011) was spoken by several hundreds of people.[8] The registrar's choice to ignore this fact is surprising, since in the same period codes were granted to *Kotava* and *Talossan*, two constructed languages with only a handful of users.

Currently, the main meeting point of the Interslavic community is a Facebook group with almost 5000 members—the largest user community of a constructed language after Esperanto. Other groups and forums amount for another 1000 members. Of course, there is some overlap between these groups, and not every member is automatically an active user of the language, but on the other hand, there are users and even fluent speakers who do not belong to any group at all. What we know for sure is that Interslavic has at least a few hundred proficient users.

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Summarizing, even if Interslavic did not fulfil the requirements for inclusion in 2012 and 2014, it most certainly does now. Let's take a look at the criteria for inclusion:

"Languages are not static objects; there is variation temporally, spacially, and socially; every language corresponds to some range of variation in linguistic expression." Two related varieties are usually considered varieties of the same language, if its speakers *"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. [...] Thus, each language identifier represents the complete range of all the spoken or written varieties of that language, including any standardized form."*[9]

> As pointed out above, Interslavic cannot be considered a version of any particular other language. The best candidate would be Old Church Slavonic, but because that language is "frozen" in the 9th century, it cannot be considered the same language. For the same reason, historical Interslavic projects can and should be considered part of the same Interslavic language.

6   Jan van Steenbergen & Vojtěch Merunka, *Čitateljnik: Antologija tekstov v medžuslovjanskom jezyku*. Tribun EU s.r.o., 2018 (ISBN 8026314077, 9788026314073).

7   https://www.ethnoentomology.cz/for-authors/ [access: 24 Dec. 2018]

8   Ivan G. Iliev, *Short History of the Cyrillic Alphabet*. Plovdiv, 2012, p. 67.

9   https://iso639-3.sil.org/about/scope [access: 24 Dec. 2018]

"In order to qualify for inclusion the language must have a literature and it must be designed for the purpose of human communication."[10]

Interslavic is both designed and used for human communication. Modern Interslavic has a printed scientific journal, several books and hundreds of longer and shorter texts that can be found on the Internet. Historical projects also include books, magazines and articles.

"It must be a complete language"[11]

Interslavic has a complete grammar, ca. 18,000 unique words and ca. 37,000 dictionary entries (not including "virtual vocabulary"), dictionaries in English, Polish, Russian and Serbian. For a constructed language, it is highly elaborate.

"and be in use for human communication by some community long enough to be passed to a second generation of users."[12]

With ca. 6000 speakers, sympathizers and interested bystanders, the Interslavic user community is probably the largest after Esperanto's, outnumbering even Interlingua and Ido (the traditional #2 and #3).

As far as we know, Interslavic does not have native speakers, nor was it ever intended to have them. Typically, constructed languages are not transmitted but learned voluntarily, and therefore they cannot be required to have native speakers. Esperanto is the only one that does, which is a side effect of its success rather than the achievement of its goal.

If the phrase "passed to a second generation of users" simply means that older, first-generation users are teaching the language to younger newcomers, then the answer is affirmative. Many students of Interslavic are in their early twenties, some of them even in their teens.

A language should be "full", which means that it is:

— *"used in a variety of domains,*

— *used to support communication across all genders and all ages,*

— *stable enough to be widely understood across the whole area of the language."*[13]

Yes, Interslavic is used in a rather wide variety of domains, including personal communication, Internet communication, scientific and non-scientific publications, radio broadcasts, websites, tourism, conferences and even a prizewinning film.

The community has grown so big that it is no longer possible for us to keep track of demographics. In the earliest years, almost all active users of the language were men, but at the moment, I think it's about fifty-fifty. The same goes for age. Some of us are older, others are younger. I have no idea how old our oldest user is, but I'm sure we have several people who are retired. Interslavic has also been used by teenagers in school exchange programs. Probably some people use it when talking to children, too.

As for stability, the first years (2006-2011) were mostly a matter of experimenting with different approaches (varying from ultra-simplified to highly archaic grammar). After Interslavic was baselined in 2011, there haven't been any substantial changes. The last few remaining differences between both Interslavic projects were eliminated in 2017 after the First Conference on the Interslavic Language. I should add that all changes were part of a process of natural development and intended to make the language easier to understand for Slavs. They were always consulted with the community and mostly the result of practical usage.

In spite of their long history, Pan-Slavic languages projects have always been a somewhat marginal phenomenon, being mostly ignored both by Slavists and interlinguists. In the digital age, this changed

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10   https://iso639-3.sil.org/about/types#Constructed [access: 24 Dec. 2018]
11   https://iso639-3.sil.org/about/types#Constructed [access: 24 Dec. 2018]
12   https://iso639-3.sil.org/about/types#Constructed [access: 24 Dec. 2018]
13   http://web.archive.org/web/20180219034657/http://www-01.sil.org/iso639-3/criteria_for_coded_languages.pdf [access: 24 Dec. 2018]

slowly but radically. Interslavic came into being because many people felt the need to use it, not because someone wanted to create it, and in the meantime, it has gained broad acceptation in scientific and non-scientific circles. Because most Slavs can understand Interslavic better than English, many people see its potential advantages in the fields of tourism, business, international events, education, entertainment, etc. Given its almost exponential growth during the last few years, it is a language that can no longer be ignored. It has become a thing.

We ask for an ISO 639-3 code not merely as a gesture of recognition, but because it becomes increasingly difficult to function without one. Libraries use them in their classification schemes. Computer support, such as keyboard definitions and spelling control, is much harder to realize without a code. Much of the Wikimedia software has already been translated into Interslavic, but its implementation is impossible without a code. And Interslavic would definitely qualify for its own Wikipedia project, but this requires a code as well.

We leave it to the registrar's wisdom to decide whether Interslavic should be qualified as a constructed language, an individual Slavic language or a Slavic macrolanguage. It has elements of all three of them. In previous change requests, the registrar opted for the second possibility, a Slavic language, a solution we can certainly live with. However, should the absence of native speakers subsequently lead to a rejection, then we kindly request you to treat it as a constructed language instead.

Best regards,
Jan van Steenbergen

COMMENT TO CHANGE REQUEST 2021-01 FOR INTERSLAVIC (ISV)

Dear Registration Authority,

More than three years ago, on 29 September 2019 to be precise, a request was filed for an ISO 639-3 code for the Interslavic language. Much to our surprise, this request is still pending. Therefore, we would like to clarify a few things about Interslavic, hoping that this information may help you in taking the right decision.

Interslavic (*medžuslovjansky, меджусловјанскы*) is an auxiliary Slavic language, intended by its authors to be intelligible to speakers of Slavic languages without any prior knowledge. This is achieved by applying the principles of „receptive multilingualism": vocabulary, phonology and grammar are entirely based on algorithms, used to eliminate idiosyncrasies and maximise comprehensibility to the largest possible number of people. For the same reason, Interslavic uses two alphabets: Latin and Cyrillic.

Interslavic is a constructed language. Like other international auxiliary languages, it is neither meant to replace the ethnic Slavic languages, nor to develop a community of native speakers, but merely to serve as a tool for international communication, for example in the fields of tourism, business, culture, ICT and governance. The language is not affiliated with any political ideology and therefore explicitly apolitical. Because Interslavic is aimed at speakers of the Slavic languages only, it can be classified as a so-called "zonal auxiliary language" and may be considered a modern successor of the Old Church Slavonic language.

In its current form, Interslavic is a relatively young project: it was started in 2006 under the name „Slovianski" and underwent revisions in 2011 and 2017. In reality, however, the language itself is much older. Efforts to create a standardised Pan-Slavic language have been made since the 17th century, and although there is no unbroken line of continuity between Interslavic and its predecessors, all of them are clearly attempts at codifying the same language; in terms of grammar and vocabulary, they are practically identical. Besides, Interslavic can also be considered an attempt at creating a written standard for the various forms of improvised communication that Slavs from different nationalities have been using for centuries, also on the Internet.

Although it is hard to estimate how many people can actually speak Interslavic and at what level, there is no doubt that Interslavic is by far the constructed language with the largest user community after Esperanto. Currently, our community consists of some 25,000 people. Precise data cannot be given, since there are many different groups on various social media where Interslavic is the primary language of communication, some of which are dedicated to particular subjects (like poetry, politics, gaming, linguistics, Slavic culture). There are six different groups on Facebook, four on Discord, six on Telegram, two on VKontakte, one on Reddit, a mailing list and a forum. We do not know how much overlap there is between these groups, nor do we know how many people use the language without being part of an Internet community. We estimate that roughly 7,000 people have active command of the language to a certain degree.

The largest group on Facebook has nearly 18,000 members, 71% of whom are men and 29% are women. All ages are represented, but only 2% of the members are younger than 18 and only 4% are older than 65. The group has members from more than 125 countries. About 70% of them live in countries with a Slavic-speaking majority (mostly Poland, Serbia, Russia, Czechia, Croatia and Ukraine).

Although Interslavic is primarily used for communication on social media, real-life events have taken place as well. In 2017 and 2018 conferences in and about Interslavic took place in the

Czech Republic, both attended by over 60 people. In 2019, a special pre-premiere of the Oscar-nominated film „The Painted Bird" was organised for members of the Interslavic community in Prague. In March 2020 an Interslavic Round Table was held in Moscow, and in September 2022 an „Interslavic Day" took place in hybrid form. In addition, there are regular online meetings („Interslavic Saturdays") via Discord, Zoom, etc.

Two books have been published in Interslavic: a translation of „The Little Prince" (also available as an audiobook) and a „Čitateljnik" (a collection of texts). Several other books are currently in preparation. Large collections of texts can also be found on the Internet (Box, Vikisbornik; see below). A scientific journal in Interslavic, „Slovjani.info" (registered in the CEEOL library in Frankfurt am Main) is published biannually. Another scientific journal, „Ethnoentomology", provides its articles with abstracts in Interslavic. On the Internet, there are several news sites (mainly: interslavic.news), blogs and personal websites in Interslavic.

„Medžuviki" is an encyclopaedic project in Interslavic, modelled after Wikipedia.

Interslavic is used in popular culture as well:

- It is the primary language In the film „The Painted Bird" by Václav Marhoul, featuring famous actors like Harvey Keitel, Udo Kier, Stellan Skarsgård, Julian Sands and Barry Pepper. It premiered at the Film Festival in Venice in 2019 and was the Czech candidate for the Oscars.
- There are several YouTube channels dedicated entirely or predominantly to Interslavic, featuring podcasts, fairy tales, subtitled movies, educational materials, conversations, etc.
- Several musicians have performed songs or brought out entire albums in Interslavic (see below for a list)
- Games, for example „Hidden Saga: Xamadeon Stone" and a card game.
- 101,000 followers on Tiktok.

We do not know if Interslavic has any native speakers yet, but there are places where it is used as a family language.

All the above refers to material in Interslavic, but there are numerous materials about Interslavic as well:

- Two official websites: http://steen.free.fr/interslavic (run by Jan van Steenbergen) and https://interslavic-language.org/ (run by Vojtěch Merunka), and two unofficial websites: https://slovjansky.com/ (run by Tima Zagorski) and https://interslavic.fun/ (run by Yaroslav Serhiyev).
- The Interslavic dictionary project at https://interslavic-dictionary.com/ with dictionaries in English, Russian, Polish, Ukrainian, Belarussian, Czech, Macedonian, Serbian and Dutch (complete); Slovak, Croatian and Bulgarian (near completion); German, Slovene, Lower Sorbian, Cashubian, Spanish and Esperanto (progressing), Upper Sorbian, Old Church Slavonic, Interlingua, Hebrew, French, Portuguese, Italian and Danish (initiated).
- The grammar of Interslavic has also been published in print (in English, Czech, Russian and Chinese). Versions in Polish and Serbian will appear soon.
- Since 2010, Interslavic has been the subject of ca. 70 academic publications (including dissertations, master's theses and publications in academic journals) as well as hundreds of articles in printed/online news media (see http://steen.free.fr/interslavic/publications.html for an overview).
- Interslavic has been described in 82 different language versions of Wikipedia.
- Hundreds of discussions, videos about Interslavic created by others can be found on YouTube, sites like Pikabu.ru and Wykop.pl, and at various other places on the Internet.

As mentioned in the original request, Interslavic has been presented at several international conferences and other events. A few universities have organised Interslavic courses and workshops. The Interslavic language is endorsed by numerous scientists, politicians, bishops and representatives of NGOs.

Given the above, there cannot be any doubt that Interslavic fulfils every possible requirement for obtaining a code within the ISO 639-3 standard. Both in terms of the size of its user community and the variety of its usage, it is surpassed by no other constructed language but Esperanto. Especially since constructed languages that have smaller communities and are used on a much smaller scale (like Kotava, Toki Pona, Lingua Franca Nova, Neo) have been given a code in recent years, an ISO 639-3 code for Interslavic should in our opinion be a sinecure.

Therefore, we kindly urge the Registration Authority to honour the 2019 request, also taking into consideration the exponential growth of the Interslavic community during the years after its submission.

Respectfully Yours,

on behalf of the Interslavic language community,

      The Interslavic Committee:
      Vojtěch Merunka
      Jan van Steenbergen
      Michał Swat
      Roberto Lombino

          December 14, 2022.

APPENDIX: Relevant links

MAIN WEBSITES

- Official website (introduction, grammar, history, tools etc.)
- Official web portal
- Unofficial website
- Another unofficial website
- Interslavic dictionary
- Medžuslovjanske novosti (Interslavic news)
- Slovjani.info (journal)
- Medžuviki (inspired by Wikipedia)
- Meetings and conferences on Interslavic
- Github
- Interslavic at Wikipedia

LITERATURE, TEXT COLLECTIONS

- Maly princ (The Little Prince)
- Čitateljnik
- Vikisbornik
- Sbor medzuslovjanskyh tekstov (Box)
- Religious texts, including The Book of Ecclesiastes, Psalms and Prayers
- Lyrics translated into Interslavic
- Stephen Hawking - A Briefer History of Time, chapter 1

SOCIAL MEDIA

- Main group on Facebook (17881 members)
- MS Věće on Facebook (about the language itself; 348 members)
- Politikovka on Facebook (about politics; 109 members)
- Interslavic poetry on Facebook (about poetry; 90 members)
- Learning Interslavic on Facebook (123 members)
- Neoslavonic group on Facebook (831 members)
- Main group on Discord (5413 members)
- Medžuslovjanska tvorba / Interslavic Art on Discord (225 members)
- Two other groups on Discord (one about Glagolitic, one about gaming)
- Main group on VKontakte (2025 members)
- Kolozor on VKontakte (60 members)
- Меджуслојанска бесѣда: general group on Telegram; 603 members)
- Malkov glas (personal group on Telegram; 569 members)
- MSbesieda (another general group on Telegram; 164 members)
- Kolozor on Telegram (61 members)
- Two other groups on Telegram ("S" Družina / "С" Дружина: the dictionary group, 41 members) and Interslavic DEV (developers' group, 25 members)
- Forum (493 members)
- Interslavic on Reddit (892 members)
- Interslavic on Tiktok (101,000 followers)

YOUTUBE CHANNELS

- Videos in Interslavic (451 videos)
- Official Interslavic canal (11,400 subscribers)
- Medžuslovjansky jezyk (1290 subscribers)
- Melac (Interslavic Creator) - YouTube (936 subscribers)
- Antigonius (896 subscribers)
- InterSlavic -Light (562 subscribers)
- Interslavic Podcast (201 subscribers)
- Mito Matija (music; 201 subscribers)
- Medžuslovjansky Slezk (168 subscribers)
- Miroslav Vančo's channel (mostly Christian themes; 64 subscribers)
- Medžumatika (mathematics; 34 subscribers)
- Rubinolas - YouTube (gaming; 39 subscribers)
- Medžurybak (11 subscribers)
- Interslavic things (12 subscribers)
- Festival Zavízofest: From Leszno, Poland, to Tanvald, Czechia with the Interslavic language, part 2
- Ecolinguist (several videos about Interslavic, including this one with 1,2 million views)
- Conlang Critic about Interslavic

MUSIC

- 8-9 albums by Melac, including Ogonj i voda, Žalosti, Neonovy blěsk, Snovanje, Prędųći, Pŕvozvųki
- Ďyvina - Album Počva
- Mito Matija - Masovo pogrebanje
- Ivanok i Marička | Иванок и Маричка (soundtrack)
- Dušo moja (from „The Painted Bird")
- Neudržima mašina dobra
- TheВЙО - Карпаты
- Hej ty, Zemjo
- Hej Sokoly, Hey Sokoly (178K views!)
- Jeden kmen - Basnj (album)
- Jeden kmen – Solnečna kareta
- Studio Čto Slyšimo Zagreb
- Кирха - у кореньях remaster (Dungeon Synth)
- Навје

FILMS

- The Painted Bird (2019)
- The Secret Number (2011; subtitles)
- Leshy / Lesapán (2015; subtitles)
- Kung Fury (2015; subtitles)
- Mortal kombat (subtitles)
- Ostrov (2008; subtitles)
- Ukradeno Kosovo (2008; subtitles)
- Disky (2020; subtitles)
- Biznes lekcija

GAMES AND OTHER APPLICATIONS

- Hairo
- Interslavic spellchecker (LibreOffice 7.3)
- Spellchecker Add-on for Firefox
- Automated translation (Polish-Interslavic)
- Automated translation (Russian-Interslavic, under development)
- Hunspell dictionary
- Casa Santa Fe Cuba
- Tesseract Finance
- Hidden Saga: Xamadeon Stone (game)
- Card game
- Hard Minus Classic Redux (game)
- Minecraft (translating project)