

## Languages:

- What was the first language? (Origin)

<https://www.mondly.com/blog/2020/05/13/oldest-languages-world/#:~:text=Dating%20back%20to%20at%20least,first%20language%20in%20the%20world>. - What are the Oldest languages in the world still spoken widely today?

According to this website: "Dating back to at least 3500 BC, the oldest proof of written Sumerian was found in today's Iraq, on an artifact known as the Kish Tablet. Thus, given this evidence, Sumerian can also be considered the first language in the world."

<https://www.holidify.com/pages/oldest-languages-of-world-365.html> - 12 Oldest Languages in the World still widely used

Tamil - Oldest Living Language of the World, 5000 years old

Sanskrit - World's Oldest Language, but fell out of common use during 600BC

According to the Bible - Hebrew since the names for Adam and Eve

- How did we get different languages
  - What was the evolution of languages like?

<https://resources.unbabel.com/blog/why-humans-speak-7000-languages> - Why do humans speak 7000 different languages

'David Armstrong, a now retired anthropologist who spent decades studying the origins of language, says "the difficulty comes from the fact that language is a behaviour, not a physical attribute, so there are no fossil records of its first appearance."

"The first is the belief that all languages ever spoken by humans originated in one single language that spread across the world due to early humans' nomadic nature. This idea is known as monogenesis (descended from a single ancestor). The second hypothesis is known as polygenesis and believes that, the same way humans evolved parallel in different parts of the world, so did language. Each of the original languages then split into numerous different ones."

Bible - Tower of Babel (Genesis 11:1-9), the reason why people speak different languages. How everyone was speaking the same language, built a tower "with its top to

the heavens”, but God disrupted the work by confusing each other so they could not understand each other.

Context - Built a tower so they could be like God and would not need him. God did not like the pride and arrogance in the hearts of people so that’s why he did this.

<https://www.k-international.com/blog/why-are-there-so-many-languages/> - Why are there so many languages

- People Move, and Languages Change (similar to the Nomadic nature of humans in the past): People are always on the move, seeking new opportunities.
- Warfare - Divides populations that once spoke a common language to create new ones. But some can become extinct because of it
- Geography - Mountains, Forests, Rivers, and Swamps keep the inhabitants divided into many small tribes. Isolation for a long period of time has produced a different language in many cases.

- How did we get certain characters/ letter to form words? Who invented the alphabet?

“The original alphabet was developed by a Semitic people living in or near Egypt.\* They based it on the idea developed by the Egyptians, but used their own specific symbols. It was quickly adopted by their neighbours and relatives to the east and north, the Canaanites, the Hebrews, and the Phoenicians. The Phoenicians spread their alphabet to other people of the Near East and Asia Minor, as well as to the Arabs, the Greeks, and the Etruscans, and as far west as present day Spain. The letters and names on the left are the ones used by the Phoenicians. “

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GEKgAdQpgro> - Who invented the Alphabet?

There is no singular person who invented the alphabet, rather a group of people which were the Ancient Egyptians.

Egyptians - Hieroglyphics, completely out of imagery. Then simplified to Abjad - foundation of most of modern alphabets

Abjad then spread to Greece, refined to then serve the Greek Language. Each Symbol/ Letter was made to represent the sounds.

At first Right to Left, Then Right to Left to Right (Serpentine Style), Finally Left to Right.

Greek Alphabet is the foundation for most of our alphabets today, such as Latin - which led to languages such as English, Spanish, French. Or Cyrillic Alphabet, which led to Russian.

- How did we start talking?
  - How did we make up different sounds for each individual letter/ character/ words?
  - Could it somehow link to the surrounding environment?

#### Origin of Speech

Happened around 2 millions years ago - when people started using tools to write down things.

<https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.303.5662.1316> - The Origin of Speech

“Archaeologists have identified various milestones in human behaviour in the 5-million-year evolutionary void between animal communication and human speech, but there is no consensus on which achievements imply the capacity for language. For example, **the first stone tools date to 2.4 million years ago; some researchers think this may indicate linguistic facility, but others argue that toolmaking is far removed from speech**. Another possible starting point is 2 million years ago, when the hominid brain began a period of rapid expansion, including in the primary brain areas associated with producing or processing language— namely Broca's area in the left frontal cortex and Wernicke's in the left temporal lobe”

<https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/10.1086/509092> - The Evolution of Human Speech

“The starting points for human speech and language were perhaps walking and running. However, fully human speech anatomy first appears in the fossil record in the Upper Palaeolithic (about 50,000 years ago) and is absent in both Neanderthals and earlier humans.”

- Will we use the same language in the future? If so, what will happen to our language that we are using today?

<https://science.howstuffworks.com/science-vs-myth/what-if/what-if-everyone-spoke-one-language.htm#:~:text=Author's%20Note-.The%20Future%20of%20Language.addition%20to%20their%20native%20tongues>. - What if Everyone on Earth Spoke the same Language?

“Many experts also believe that we are headed toward a world in which everyone will speak the same [language](#), especially since globalization is making communication between even the most far-flung communities possible. Perhaps everyone would learn this language in addition to their native tongues.”

Also some mixed opinions, from “highly unlikely” to “not in a million years”. Language is so closely tied to culture, family, and personal identity.

[http://clta-gny.org/article/endangered\\_language.html](http://clta-gny.org/article/endangered_language.html) - Endangered Language

Linking back to the Tower of Babel - a lot of language was being created from that point. Many evolved, whilst many died (since the people using them perished). Continues to change (come and go) for the last millenia. Recently, less has been coming and a lot more disappearing.

As people were settling down to become farmers, language too settled down and became fewer in number. Thanks to globalisation and better communities, dominant languages such as English, Chinese, and Spanish are taking over.