**World Languages**

There isn’t certain information about how many languages are spoken in the world today and how many languages are native language. Reasons like some languages don’t have written language still, some languages aren’t researched sufficiently and there isn’t consensus for the dialects are language or not make difficult the certain number of languages in the world. However, it is estimated that there are 3000-3500 languages in the world.

Most spoken 5 native language: Chinese (1 billion 300 million person), English (427 million person), Spanish (266 million person), Hindi (260 million person), Turkish (220 million person).

**Classification of Languages**

World languages can be classified in terms of structure and origin.

**In terms of structure**

**Radical languages**: Each word consists of monosyllable. These words don’t take affix and they aren’t conjugated. Sentence consists of conjoining of base words. Meaning of a word is determined according to stress and place of the word in the sentence. Chinese, Tibetan, Vietnamese, Basque in Europe, and some African languages are belong to this group.

**Agglutinative languages:** Derivational affixes andinflectional suffixes are added to the words in this group. Word formation and conjugate are made through these affixes. Turkish, Mongolian, Finnish, Japanese, Manchu-Tunguz languages are belong to this group. Turkish is an agglutinative language.

**Inflecting languages:** Words are inflected with prefix, infix and suffix. Vowel of base is changed in course of conjugate. Original sound isn’t changed in some inflecting languages. Namely, consonants remain unchanged but vowels change. Consonants of base word take infix and a new word is derived. Arabic and Semitic languages are belong to this group.

**In terms of Origin**

**Indic:** Hindi, Persian, German, English Latin, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Armenian, Russian, Serbia, Polish.

**Semitic Language Family:** Arabic, Hebrew, Akkadia.

**Bantu Language Family:** Bantu languages in Middle and South Africa.

**Chinese language Family:** Chinese, Tibetan.

**Ural- Altaic Language Family :** Finnish, Tungarian, Turkish, Mongolian

Turkish is an agglutinative language in terms of structure and it rides on Altaic of Ural-Altaic language family in terms of origin.

**Historical Periods of Turkish**

Turkish is one of the oldest languages of the world but it can’t be followed with documents till a certain term. Known Turkish history is accepted that it begins with Huns in 3th century B.C. Because there is no documents about Huns, the information related this term can be reached by Chinese documents. Also, some Turkish words can be found in Sumerian, Byzantine and Arabic resources. Periods which don’t have a written resource of Turkish are named as “Dark Period”. Linguists seperate these periods into three group:

* **Altaic Language Community Period:** Turkish wasn’t diverged from Mongolian, Manchu, Japanese, Korean and Tunguz in this period.
* **Earliest Turkish Period:** Turkish gained its own language id from main Altai.
* **Initial Turkish Period:** Avar, Bulgarian and Khazar languages weren’t diverged from Turkish in this period.

As stated above, these informations aren’t certain because it isn’t base upon the documents. And there isn’t a consensus for this issue among linguists.

Periods of Turkish which based on documents are seperated as below:

**Old Turkish Period:** Turk name was used for the first time in this period and first documents were found in this period. Old Turkish Period involves between 6-10th century. Old Turkish and Uigur were used in this period and Turkish has a pure view in terms of sound, form and vocabulary. Yenisey (6th century A.D.) and Orkhon Scripts (8th century A.D.) are belong to this term. Documents show that Turkish has a very old lingual level of development.

**Middle Turkish Period:** This period involves between 11-15th century. It begins with Karakhanids. After they accepted the Mohammedanism, Turks started to use Arabic alphabet. Turkish was under the influence of Arabic and Persian. First important Turkish Works of period are Kutadgu Bilig by Yusuf Has Hacib , Divanü Lugat’it-Türk by Kaşgarlı Mahmut and Atabetü’l-Hakayık by Edib Ahmed Yükneki.

There are dialects of Turkish named as Chagatai in the east, Kipczak in the North and Oghuz in the West in this period.

**New Turkish Period:** This period involves between 16-20th century. Local language features begin to enter to the written language. New and different written languages begin to arise among East and West Turks in this period.

**Contemporary Turkish Period:** This period involves 20th century and today’s Turkish.

**Alphabet (Writing) and Language Revolution**

State of the Republic of Turkey begins to take shape with modernities and revolutions. Changing of control center, abolition of the sultanate, getting across the secularistic system are some of the revolutions. Language subject is added to the revolutions, too. As a consequence, important steps are taken with the change of alphabet.

**Alphabet (Writing) Revolution**

Adapted form of Latin alphabet to Turkish (new Turkish alphabet) was accepted with the law dated 1 November 1928 and numbered 1353 about acceptance and application of New Turkish Alphabet. This law entered into force in 3 November 1928. Time was given to apply the alphabet change for the public documents and government correspondence until June 1930. This application succeed in a short span of time. Alphabet revolution is the general name of this change and the arrangement of new letters.

Turks used old Turkish and Uigur letters before. They began to use Arabic alphabet after the acceptance of Islam. Adaptation of this alphabet to Turkish took a long time. Some problems arising from disharmony with Turkish don’t be solved for a long time. Arabic alphabet can’t meet the Turkish vowels sufficiently. So, the same letter was used for more than one vowel and this circumstance caused a trouble for reading. Because Turkish is a rich language in terms of vowels, this is a big problem for Turkish. There are also some other letters which are used as common to meet some sounds besides vowels. Therefore, you can decide that how can you read a word according to the place of this word in a sentece. For example; it is possible to read a word which consist of “ kef, vav, lam” as “gül”, “rose in English”, “kül”, “ash” in English” and “göl”, “lake” in English. Also there are some letters in Arabic which can’t be pronounced in Turkish completely. So, there are lots of reasons to change the alphabet. And after a time, Latin alphabet is accepted by Turkish people.

Discussion and change suggestions about alphabet base on the past.

**Language Revolution**

After alphabet revolution, Turkish should be cleaned up from the oppression of foreign languages. Arabic and Persian lessons were removed from shools in 1 September 1929. A language commission was created for alphabet revolution and this commission was working for simplifaction of language.

Atatürk discussed the language problem as a national issue and he established the Turkish Language Association in 12 July 1932. This date is accepted as the beginning of language revolution.

Turkish Language Association made its first meeting in 26 September 1932 under the presidency of Atatürk. Besides member of the commission, lots of scientist and artist were invited to the meeting. This meeting was named as “I. Turkish Language Congress” and its main topic was to purify the Turkish. Some decisions were taken in this meeting. These decisions are like below:

1. Finding Turkish words for foreign words (purify, simplification)
2. Bringing into force to the Turkish words in old documents (scanning)
3. Determine the Turkish words used by society
4. Research the origin and history of Turkish (etymology)
5. Examining the structure of language, origin of words and affixes and deriving new Turkish words and finding terms for science (derivation and nomenclature)