

## Interesting facts about languages

**Do you know how many languages are there in the world? Which alphabet is the shortest and how many Chinese characters do you need to know to read a Chinese newspaper? Check out some fantastic facts about foreign languages!**



The most people in the world speak Chinese – it is approximately a billion people. Hindi is spoken by approximately 400 million people, Spanish by approximately 350 million and English by approximately 320 million.

There are 6-7 thousand languages in the world and about 2400 are in danger of extinction.

Chinese contains about 50,000 characters. To read and understand texts in newspapers you need to know about 2 thousand characters.

The Bible is the most often translated book. According to the data provided by the portal [www.wycliffe.org](http://www.wycliffe.org), as of today it has been fully translated into 500 languages, in 1,300 languages the New Testament and fragments of the Old Testament are available. The second most often translated book is "Pinocchio" by Carlo Collodi. The book has been translated into approximately 240 languages.

In French, the vowel "o" can be pronounced in thirteen different ways.

Most European languages are based on the Latin alphabet. Some Slavic languages are based on Cyrillic. Such languages as Greek, Armenian, Georgian and Yiddish have their own characters.

The Germanic language family includes, among others, Danish, Norwegian, Swedish, Icelandic, German, Dutch, English and Yiddish.

Examples of Romance languages include Italian, French, Spanish, Portuguese and Romanian.

The Slavic language family includes, among others, Russian, Ukrainian, Belarusian, Polish, Czech, Slovak, Slovenian, Serbian, Croatian, Macedonian and Bulgarian.

Multilingualism brings numerous benefits: it facilitates learning more languages, has a positive impact on the thinking process and conduce contacts with other people and cultures.

The longest alphabet consisting of 74 letters belongs to the Khmer's language, and the shortest alphabet appears in the Rotokas language. The Rotokas is spoken in Papua New Guinea and is considered the simplest language in the world - its alphabet consists of only 11 letters. There are only 5 vowels and 6 consonants in it. It is spoken by about 4,000 people living on Bougainville Island.

The Armenian language is used by the inhabitants of the village of Archib located on the Caspian Sea coast in Russia. It is estimated that it is used by only about 1,000 people, but only in the spoken form, as it does not have a written form at all. It is mainly used in informal situations - first of all, among family members and friends.

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