

1. Indo-European languages

The various subgroups of the Indo-European language family include (in historical order of their first attestation):

.....**NAMERNO UKLONJEN DEO TEKSTA**.....

In addition to the classical ten branches listed above, several extinct and little-known languages have existed:

No doubt other Indo-European languages once existed which have now vanished without leaving a trace. Membership of languages in the same language family is determined by the presence of shared retentions, i.e., features of the proto-language (or reflexes of such features) that cannot be explained better by chance or borrowing (convergence). Membership in a branch/group/subgroup within a language family is determined by shared innovations which are presumed to have taken place in a common ancestor. For example, what makes Germanic languages "Germanic" is that large parts of the structures of all the languages so designated can be stated just once for all of them. In other words, they can be treated as an innovation that took place in Proto-Germanic, the source of all the Germanic languages.

1.1. Satem and Centum languages

.....**NAMERNO UKLONJEN DEO TEKSTA**.....

1.2. Suggested superfamilies

2. History of the idea of Indo-European

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3.2. Indo-European expansion

3.3. Timeline constructed on 'Kurgan Hypothesis'

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4.1. Location hypotheses

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It should be noted that theories of the origin of Indo-European languages are not based on purely linguistic concepts. These theories are highly dependent on extra-linguistic factors, particularly interpretations of archaeological findings and the unattested meaning of words dating back as much as 3500 years or more before writing. The reference above to "mainstream" opinion concerning origins in the Pontic-Caspian steppes relies on some of such extra-linguistic conclusions, leaving some other key issues concerning time depth explicitly unresolved (Mallory 1989, p137). Since there is no direct way of knowing what language was spoken by a particular archaeological culture or how the meaning of words changed over thousands of years, theories about the location of the origin of Indo-European languages remain largely conjectures.

5. Paleolithic Continuity Theory

5.1. Anatolian hypothesis

The main strength of the farming hypothesis lies in its linking of the spread of Indo-European languages with an archeologically known event that likely involved major population shifts: the spread of farming (though the validity of basing a linguistics theory on archeological evidence remains disputed).

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