**FIVE REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD LEARN MORE ABOUT SAKHA AND THEIR LANGUAGE**

1. The Yakut population is estimated to be about 500,000, and can be found mostly in Russia, specifically in the Sakha Republic, also known as Yakutia.

2. A member of the Northern Turkic language group, Sakha shares many structural similarities to other Altaic languages (such as agglutinative, SOV structure, vowel harmony, etc.). Sakha is most closely related to Shor, Dolgan, and Tuwan, other Turkic languages spoken in Russia.

3. The Sakha Republic is the largest of the 10 autonomous republics in the Russian Federation. Covering nearly 1.2 million square miles, it is only slightly smaller than the whole country of India.

4. Oymyakon, in the Sakha Republic, has the lowest recorded temperature in history at -90 degrees F on February 6, 1933, and averages -58 degrees F during the winter.

5. The Yakutian horse comes from the Sakha Republic. It is a small, sturdy hour with a thick mane and heavy coat, which makes it very adaptable for living in the extreme cold climate of the area.

**ABOUT US**

The Center for Languages of the Central Asian Region (CeLCAR) at Indiana University develops materials for learning and teaching a wide variety of Central Asian languages.

For more information, go to [www.iub.edu/~celcar](http://www.iub.edu/~celcar).

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**SAKHA**

**SOME USEFUL PHRASES IN SAKHA**

**Дорообо. Аатым Дьоон.**
[doro:bo. a:tum jo:n.]
/Doroobo. Aatim Dyoon./

**Hi. My name is John.**

**Аатыҥ кимий?**
[a:tuŋ kimi?:]
/Aating kimiy?/

**What is your name?**

**Эн дьыалаҥ хайдагый?**
[en dyialang khaidaghiy?]
/En dyialang khaidaghiy?/

**How are you doing?**

**Махтал, үчүгэй. Оттон эн?**
[maxtal, uʧugey. otːon en?]
/Makh-tal, uchugey. Otton en?/

**I’m fine, thanks. And you?**

**Эн ия кэн тан сылдьаҕыт?**
[en ija xanːan sulɟaɣɯt]
/En ija xanːan sulɟaɣɯt?/

**Where are you from?**

**Мин Индианаттан сылдьабын.**
[min indianatːan sulɟabɯn.]
/Min Indianattan sulɟabɯn./

**I’m from Indiana.**

**Уборнай ханна баар?**
[ubornay xanːa baːr?]
/Ubornay khanna baar?/

**Where is the bathroom?**

**Эйиэхэ улахан бацьыбаба биэрнэм.**
[ejijex ułaxan bahuːba biernem.]
/Eyiekhe ulakhan bahiba biernem./

**Thank you very much.**

**Керсүҥүээнэ диери.**
[kersyuhyoxːe dieri.]
/Korsyuukh-khe dieri./

**Good bye.**
Sakha belongs to the Altaic group of languages, which includes languages such as Turkish, Mongolian, and arguably Korean and Japanese. Altaic languages have historically been spoken across areas of Asia and Eastern Europe, and are named after the Altai Mountains in Central Asia. More specifically, Sakha belongs to the Northern branch of the Turkic language family, which also includes Shor and Dolgan, spoken in Russia, and Tuva, spoken in Russia, Mongolia, and China. Yakut has two main dialects: Central (comprised of the Aldan, Eastern, and Western Lena varieties) and the Peripheral dialect (comprised of the northeastern and northwestern varieties).

Similar to other Altaic languages, Sakha uses a subject-object-verb word order and is an agglutinative language, where one root word has multiple suffixes added to indicate discrete grammatical functions. And like many other Central Asian languages, Sakha features vowel harmony, wherein the vowel quality of a vowel in a word directly affects the vowel quality of the other vowels within the word.

WHAT ALPHABET DO THE YAKUTS USE?

Yakut was first written in the 17th century using a modified version of the Cyrillic alphabet. For a short period in the early 19th century, Yakuts adopted a modified Latin alphabet. However, they switched back to using a Cyrillic based alphabet in 1939 under the Soviet Union. This modern alphabet, known as the Sakha alphabet, consists of the usual Russian Cyrillic characters but with the addition of five letters: Ӧ, Ӈ, Ҥ, Һ, and Ү.

Although 12 of the letters of the alphabet are used only in Russian loanwords.