

Chaldean Neo-Aramaic

Spoken in: Iraq, Turkey, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Germany, Lebanon, Netherlands, Sweden, Syria, and USA.

Region: Iraqi Kurdistan and Mosul, now also Baghdad and Basra

Total speakers: 200,000

Genetic Classification: Afro-Asiatic Semitic Central Semitic Aramaic Eastern Aramaic Central North eastern Chaldean Neo-Aramaic

Chaldean Neo-Aramaic is a modern Eastern Aramaic or Syriac language, spoken in the region between Lake Urmia in Iranian Azerbaijan and Mosul in northern Iraq. It is not to be confused with the, mostly now disused, term Chaldean referring to the Old Aramaic dialect of the Chaldean, or eleventh, dynasty of Babylonia. Originally, Chaldean Neo-Aramaic was spoken on the Plain of Mosul, northern Iraq, but it is now the language of a worldwide diaspora. Most speakers are members of the Chaldean Catholic Church.

Chaldean is written in the Madnhâyâ version of the Syriac alphabet, which is also used for classical Syriac. The School of Alqosh produced religious poetry in the colloquial Chaldean rather than classical Syriac, in the 17th century, and the Dominican Press in Mosul has produced a number of books in the language.

Currently SSWAHS Health Care Interpreter Service employs 5 Chaldean sessional interpreters.

Chaldean alphabet: (Syriac alphabet)

Estrangelo

ܟܢ	ܝܘܕܗ	ܛܝܝܬܝܗ	ܗܝܝܬܝܗ	ܙܝܢܝܗ	ܘܘܘܗܝܗ	ܗܝܗܝܗ	ܕܠܐܬܝܗ	ܓܡܐܠܝܗ	ܒܝܝܬܝܗ	ܐܠܦܝܗ
kap	yodh	ṭéith	héith	zâyn	waw	hé	dalâth	gamâl	béith	alâp
k, k/kh	y	ṭ	h	z	w	h	d, ḡ/dh	g, ḡ/gh	b, b/bh	ʿ
[k, x]	[j]	[t̪]	[ħ]	[z]	[w]	[h]	[d, ð]	[g, ɣ]	[b, v]	[ʔ]
20	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
ܬܘܘܗܝܗ	ܫܝܝܢܝܗ	ܪܝܝܫܝܗ	ܩܘܦܝܗ	ܫܐܕܗܝܗ	ܦܝܗ	ܐܝܢܝܗ	ܫܝܡܟܐܬܝܗ	ܢܘܢܝܗ	ܡܝܝܡܝܗ	ܠܡܐܕܗ
taw	sheen	résh	qop	ṣadhé	pé	ʿain	simkâth	nun	meem	lamâdh
t, t̪/th	sh	r	q	ṣ	p, p̄/ph	ʿ	s	n	m	l
[t]	[ʃ]	[r]	[q]	[s]	[p, f]	[ʕ]	[s]	[n]	[m]	[l]
400	300	200	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30

Western, Jacobite or Serto script

Consonants

kap	yodh	téith	héith	zâyn	waw	hé	dalâth	gamâl	béith	alâp
k, k/kh	y	t	h	z	w	h	d, d/dh	g, ḡ/gh	b, b/bh	ʾ
[k, x]	[j]	[t̪]	[h]	[z]	[w]	[h]	[d, ð]	[g, ɣ]	[b, v]	[ʔ]
20	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
taw	sheen	résh	qop	şadhé	pé	ʿain	simkâth	nun	meem	lamâdh
t, t̪/th	sh	r	q	ʃ	p, p̄/ph	ʿ	s	n	m	l
[t]	[ʃ]	[r]	[q]	[ʃ]	[p, f]	[ʿ]	[s]	[n]	[m]	[l]
400	300	200	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30

Vowel diacritics

							Eastern
							Western
u, ū	o, ō	ā	a	e	ē	i, ī	

Eastern or Nestorian script

										
										
kap	yodh	téith	héith	zâyn	waw	hé	dalâth	gamâl	béith	alâp
k	y	t	h	z	w	h	d	g	b	ʻ
[cʰ, c]	[j]	t	[x]	[z]	[w]	[h]	[d, ð]	[ɣ, ʔ, ʕ, j]	[b, w]	[ʔ]
20	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
										
										
taw	sheen	résh	qop	ṣadhé	pé	ʻain	simkâth	nun	meem	lamâdh
t	sh	r	q	ṣ	p	ʻ	s	n	m	l
[tʰ, t, θ]	[ʃ]	[r]	[q]	[s]	[pʰ, p]	[ʔ, ʕ]	[s]	[n]	[m]	[l]
400	300	200	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30
										
d	t	p	ṣ	t	p	ž	ž	č	ğ	
[ð]	[θ]	[f]	[dʰ / ðʰ]	[dʰ / ðʰ]	[f]	[ʒ]	[ʒ]	[tʃ]	[dʒ]	
Vowel diacritics										
										
bă	ba	bĩ	be	û	ô	î				
[ba]	[ba]	[bi]	[bi]	[uj, u]	[u]	[ij, i]				