



# Itelmen

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## About the Itelmen

Originally Itelmen was spoken throughout Kamchatka, and possibly also in the northern [Kuril Islands](#). [Vladimir Atlasov](#), who annexed Kamchatka and established military bases in the region, estimated in 1697 that there were about 20,000 ethnic Itelmens. The explorer [Stepan Krasheninnikov](#), who gave the first detailed description of the Itelmen language and culture, identified the three main dialects, but explained that all Itelmens could understand each other.

## News & Events

In 1930 a Latin-based alphabet was designed for all the native languages of northern Siberia, and in 1932 a 27-letter Itelmen alphabet was created. A few textbooks were written in this alphabet during the 1930s, but it was quickly abandoned. More recently a Cyrillic-based alphabet, designed in 1986 and consisting of 32 letters, has been used.