

Four Basic Views of Tongues

This chart shows four of the most common positions regarding tongues. For simplicity, the focus is on *speaking* with tongues and not *interpretation* of tongues. To be concise, doctrinal differences, not agreements, are highlighted. Furthermore, only the fundamental disagreements are presented, as there are many other minor points of debate. It is also acknowledged that there could be a myriad of viewpoints that combine various attributes from each of the four columns.

Foreign languages--a sign gift not needed today	Foreign languages--one of many spiritual gifts (given to some but not all believers as a sign to unbelievers)	A heavenly language--one of many spiritual gifts (given to some but not all believers as a prayer language)	A heavenly language--evidence of the Spirit's fullness and a private prayer language for all believers
Nature			
Earthly, human languages Speaker knows what he is saying Understood by the hearers (otherwise not allowed unless interpreted) A miraculous enablement to speak languages not learned	Earthly, human languages Speaker knows what he is saying Understood by the hearers (otherwise not allowed unless interpreted) A miraculous enablement to speak languages not learned and/or a special capacity to speak foreign languages	Angelic, heavenly language Speaker doesn't know what he is saying Not understood by the hearers without interpretation or a second hearing miracle A miraculous enablement to speak in the language of heaven	Angelic, heavenly language Speaker doesn't know what he is saying Not understood by the hearers without interpretation or a second hearing miracle A miraculous enablement to speak in the language of heaven
Purpose			
Not necessarily related to the baptism or filling with the Spirit A sign to unbelieving Israel to confirm the word before the Bible was completed (and a sign of God's pending judgment of Israel) A temporary sign gift given to the infant church during the foundational apostolic age	Not necessarily related to the baptism or filling with the Spirit A sign to unbelievers to confirm the word while communicating spiritual truth to people of different languages A spiritual gift given to some but not all believers	Not necessarily related to the baptism or filling with the Spirit A sign to unbelievers to confirm the word and a private, devotional, prayer language to edify one's self and others if interpreted A spiritual gift given to some but not all believers	The initial evidence of the baptism (filling) of the Holy Spirit A sign to unbelievers to confirm the word and a private, devotional, prayer language to edify one's self Public ministry gift not given to all believers, but the initial evidence should be sought by all believers
Duration			
Ceased after the apostolic age since its purpose as a sign of confirmation and judgment was fulfilled	Can function the same today as a sign to unbelievers (even if in a less miraculous way than its original use in Acts)	Functions the same today (heavenly prayer language gift given to some but not all believers)	Functions the same today (evidence of Spirit's fullness and heavenly prayer language for all believers)

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