



Language Family

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Language Family

Adapted from

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2. Arlotto, Anthony. 1972. An introduction to Historical Linguistics. University Press of America.
3. Dr. C. George Boeree Shippensburg University
<http://webpace.ship.edu/cgboer/languagefamilies.htm>
!
4. [Language Families](http://www.putlearningfirst.com/language/01origin/tree.html)
<http://www.putlearningfirst.com/language/01origin/tree.html>
5. [Chapter 5 : Language Family](http://www.uio.no/studier/emner/hf/ikos/EXFAC03-AAS/h05/larestoff/linguistics/Chapter%205.(H05).pdf)
[http://www.uio.no/studier/emner/hf/ikos/EXFAC03-AAS/h05/larestoff/linguistics/Chapter%205.\(H05\).pdf](http://www.uio.no/studier/emner/hf/ikos/EXFAC03-AAS/h05/larestoff/linguistics/Chapter%205.(H05).pdf)



Families of Language

- The first scientific attempts to discover the history of the world's languages were made at the end of the 18th century.
- Scholar began to compare groups of languages in a systematic and detailed way, to see whether there were correspondence between them.
- If there could be demonstrated, it could be assumed that the languages were related-in other words, that they were developed from common source, even though this might no longer exist.



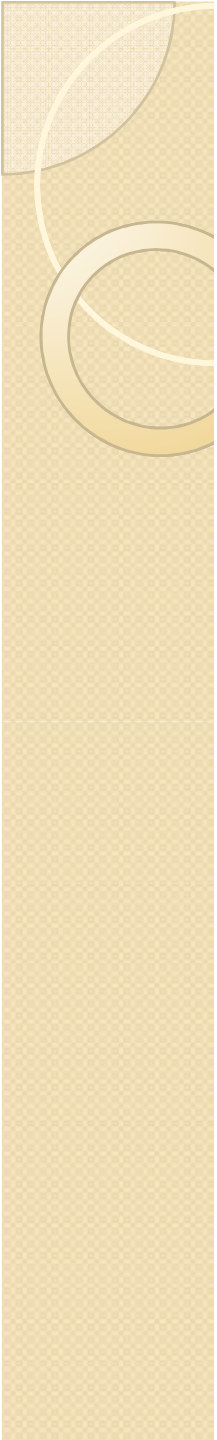
Families of Language

- Evidence of a common origin for groups of languages was readily available in Europe, in that French, Spanish, Italian, and other Romance languages were clearly descended from Latin.
- 19th century, it was convincingly examined the hypothesis that there was once a language from which many of the languages of Eurasia have derived.
- This language came to be called Proto-Indo-European.



Proto language

- **a language family is** a group of languages with a common ancestor.
- This common ancestor is referred to as a **protolanguage**.
- The proto-language split up into two or more dialects, which gradually became more and more different from each other—for example, because the speakers lived far from each other and had little or no mutual contact—until the speakers of one dialect could not understand the speakers of the other dialects any longer, and the different dialects had to be regarded as separate languages.

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- When this scenario is repeated over and over again through centuries and millennia, large language families develop.



How many language families are there?

- Linguists do not agree about the number of language families in the world.



Types of classification

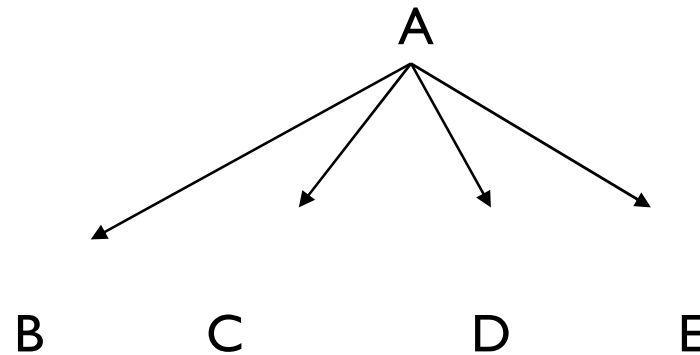
- **Typological classification:**
This system groups together languages which share “important” features or appear to have similar grammars. The classification is done without regard to the history or geographical location of the languages involved.
- **Genetic classification**
The classification is based not on the simple discovery of similar features in two or more languages, but rather on recurring correspondences between universal elements of language. It was shought in the facts of human history.



FAMILY TREES

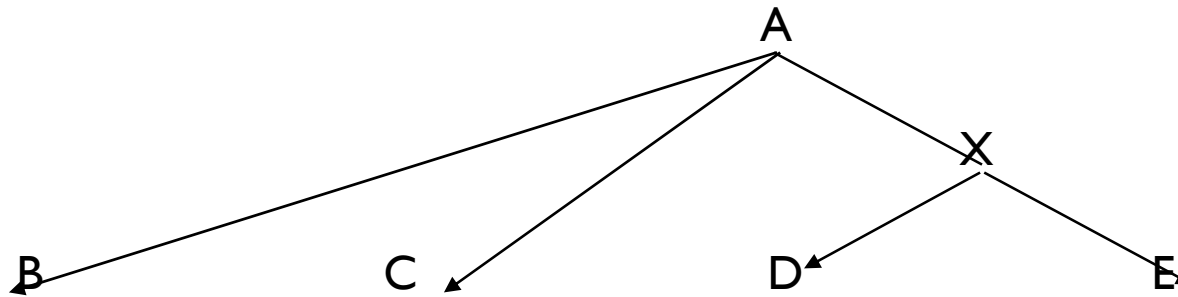
- For expressing genetic relationships
- Created by August Schleicher, 19th German Linguist
- Consists of a parent language as a starting point with branches showing the daughter languages and the particular affinities among them.

FAMILY TREES



- The descendants is posited as language A.
- The time span is represented by the line connecting A with its daughters.

FAMILY TREE



- Language X is talked an intermediate common language.
- Intermediate, because it occupies a position between the attested languages and the oldest reconstructable common language.
- Common, because it has more than one descendant.

FAMILY TREE

- Sometimes it happens that two/more of the languages within a given family share certain features from the other members of the same families (underwent a common period of development not shared by the others)



Language isolates

- A language which appears to have no “relatives” either living or preserved in records
- The most famous of these is Basque, spoken in northern Spain and southern France



Language family

- ❖ Language families of Europe and the Mideast
- ❖ Language family of asia
- ❖ Language family of africa
- ❖ Language family of the Americas



Language families of Europe and the Mideast

1. Indo-European
2. Semitic
3. Hamito semitic
4. Sumerian
5. Finno-Ugric
6. Altaic
7. Bascque
8. Southern and northern caucasian

The Indo-European Family (with the isolates Basque, Burushaski, and Nahali)





The Indo-European Family (with the isolates Basque, Burushaski, and Nahali)

- This is the language that has been the subject of the most intensive study
- The single largest language family, Indo-European has about 150 languages and about three billion speakers.
- Languages include Hindi and Urdu (400 million), Bengali (200 million), Spanish (300 million), Portuguese (200 million), French (100 million), German (100 million), Russian (300 million), and English (400 million) in Europe and the Americas.
- With English, one can reach approximately one billion people in the world.
- There are three language isolates represented on this map, unrelated to any of the language families: Basque thrives between France and Spain. Burushaski and Nahali are found in the Indian subcontinent.

The Indo-European Family

(<http://www.putlearningfirst.com/language/01origin/tree.html>)

Indo-European					
Germanic	Celtic	Italic	Hellenic	Balto-Slavonic	Indo-Iranian
<i>Low German</i> <i>Old Norse</i> <i>Anglo-Saxon</i>		<i>Latin</i>	<i>Classical</i> <i>Greek</i>		
Old English Frisian Flemish Dutch German	Breton Manx Scots Gaelic Irish Gaelic Welsh	Romanian French Portuguese Spanish Italian	Modern Greek	Lithuanian Russian Serbo-Croat Polish Czech	Hindi Punjabi Bengali Romany Sanskrit
Icelandic Norwegian Swedish Danish					



The Indo-European Family

(<http://www.putlearningfirst.com/language/01origin/tree.html>)

- Modern English does not appear in the table above.
- This is because modern English, uniquely amongst Indo-European languages in the last thousand years, is a blend of French and Old English (with elements of Latin and Scandinavian) making it both Italic (or Romance) and Germanic.
- It is this blend which gives us such a large vocabulary and a flexibility to adapt to circumstances.
- The "mongrel" language continues to adapt while other languages try to keep out foreign influences.



Semitic

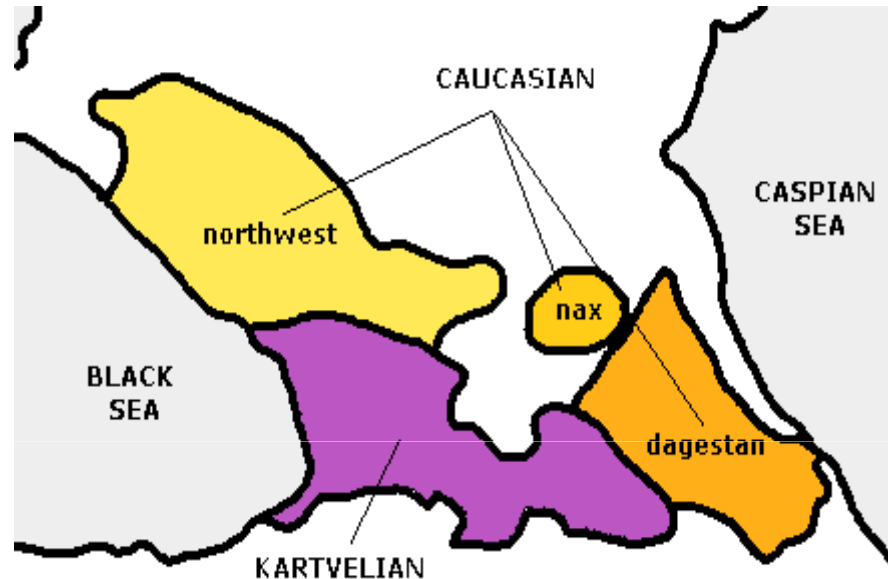
- The most studied group of languages in the world next to Indo-European
- Semitic falls into three main branches: Northwest, Northeast, and Southwest.
- Northeast, Akkadia, which include Babylonian and Assyrian dialect
- Northwest group includes several languages of the eastern Mediterranean area.
- Southwest group includes some of the languages of Ethiopia. The most important language of this group is Arabic.

The Altaic Family (with the isolates Ket and Gilyak)



- There are about 60 languages in the Altaic family, with about 250 million speakers. Included are Turkish and Mongolian.
- There is considerable controversy about this family. First, it is often classified with the Uralic languages (see above), which have a similar grammatic structures.
- Second, many linguists doubt that Korean, Japanese (125 million speakers), or Ainu should be included, or that these last three are even related to each other!
- Also represented here are the language isolates Gilyak and Ket.

The Caucasian Family



- There are 38 Caucasian languages between Russian and the Middle East, with about five million speakers. Abkhasian and Chechenian are the most familiar.
- The Kartvelian languages are considered by many linguists to be a separate family, possibly related to Indo-European. Its prime example is Georgian.



Language family of asia

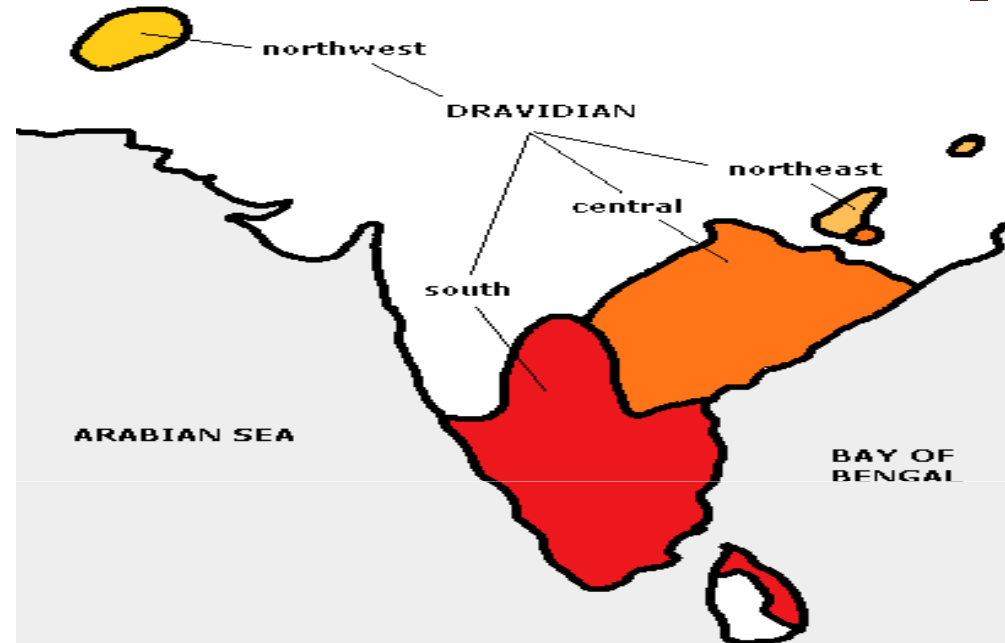
- Sino tibetan
- Tai
- Mon-khmer
- Dravidian
- Malayo-Polynesian
- Australian and Papuan
- Paleo-Asiatic

The Sino-Tibetan Family



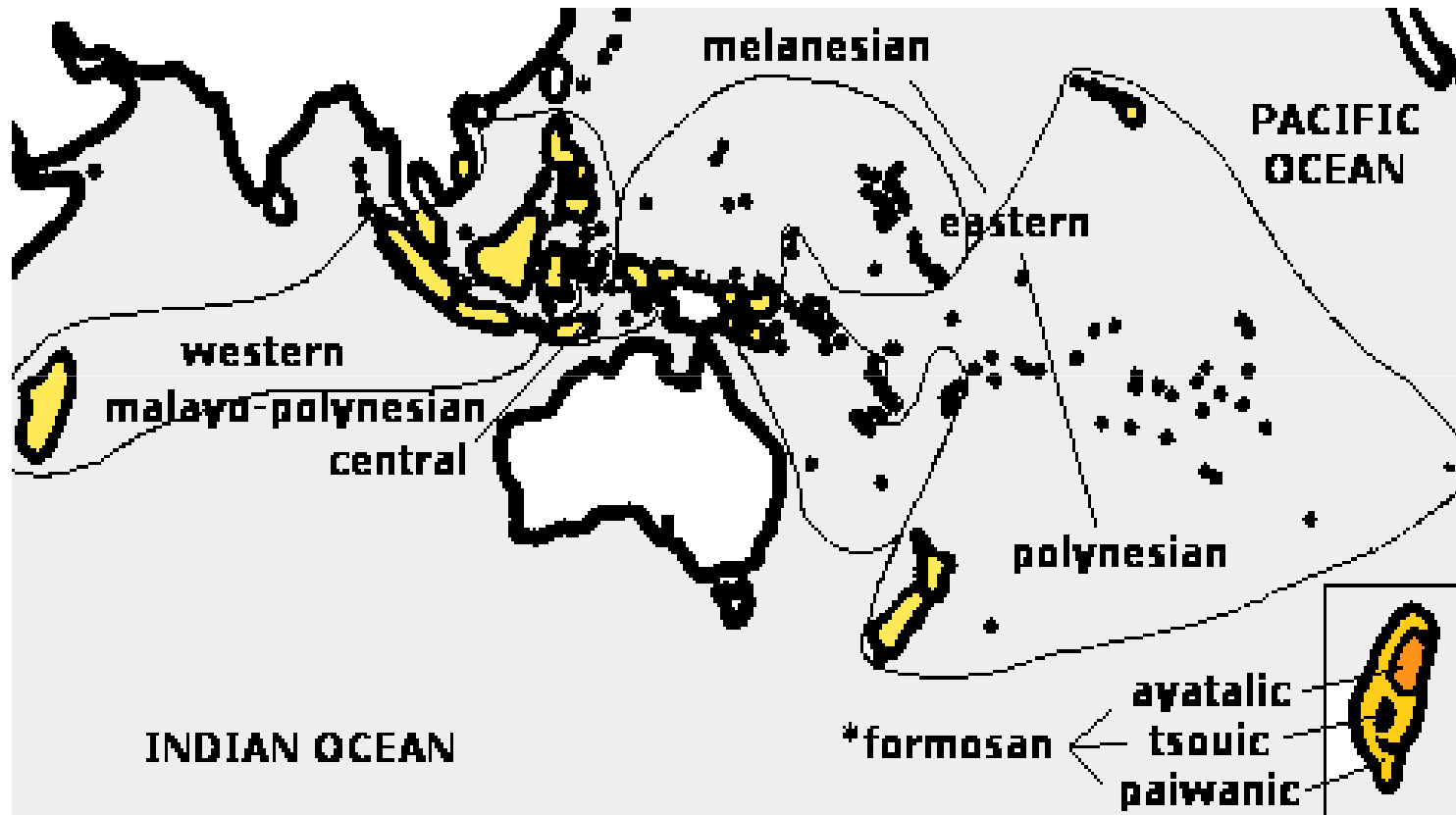
- A very important language family, it includes some 250 languages. Mandarin Chinese (Putonghua) alone is spoken by one billion people!
- The main branches are **Tibetic, Burmic, Bai, Karenic, and Sinitic**

The Dravidian Family



- These are the "old" languages of India, with about 25 representatives and 150 million speakers. Best known are Tamil and Telugu.
- The 23 Dravidian languages are spoken in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.
- The family is divided into three branches: **South Dravidian, Central Dravidian, and North Dravidian**

The Austronesian Family

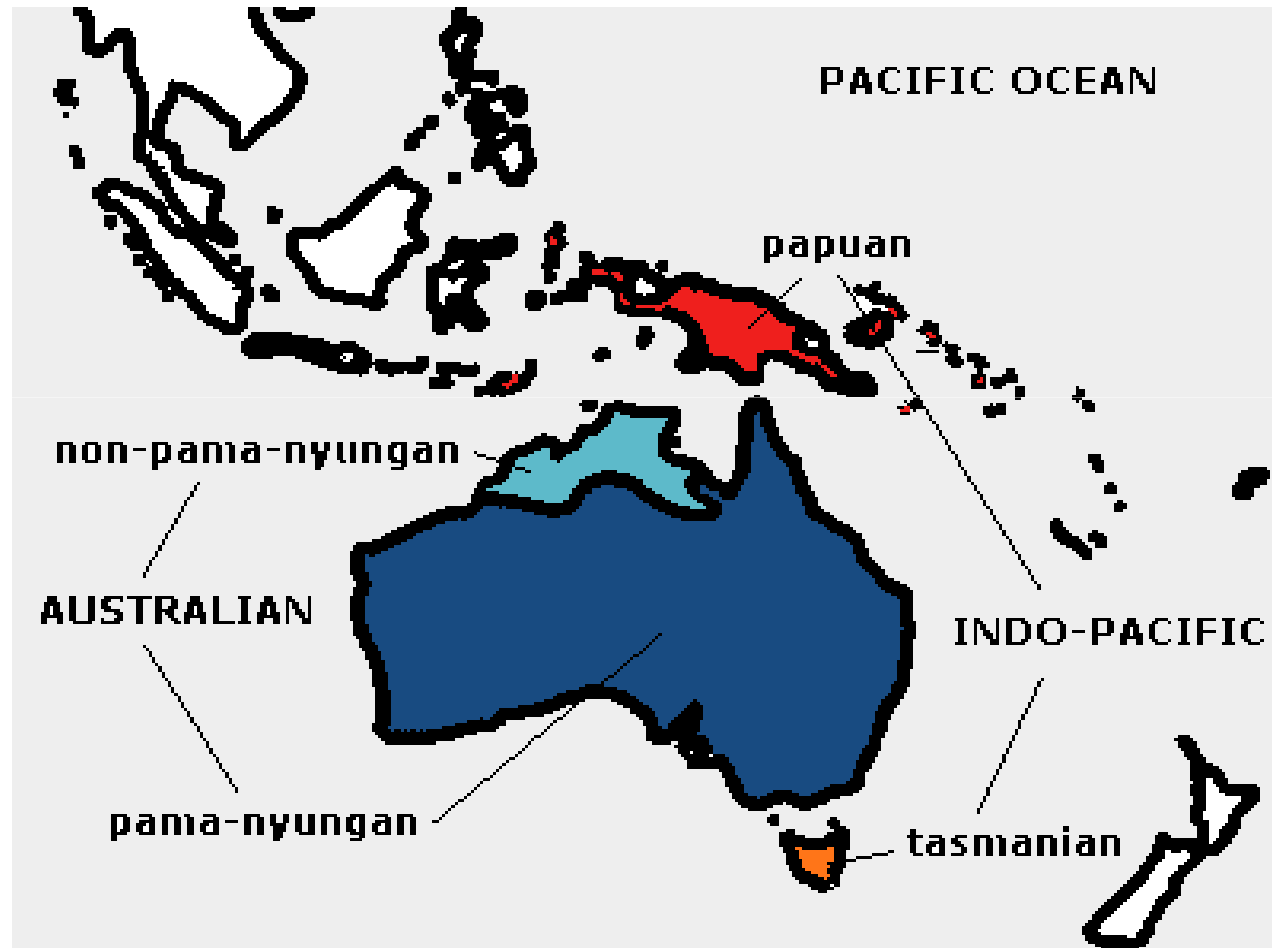




The Austronesian Family

- This family includes some 1000 different languages, spoken by about 250 million speakers.
- Malay and Indonesian (essentially the same language) account for about 140 million.
- Other examples include Madagascar in Africa, Tagalog in the Philippines, the aboriginal languages of Formosa (Taiwan) -- now almost displaced by Chinese -- and the many languages of the Pacific Islands, from Hawaiian in the north Pacific to Maori in New Zealand.

The Indo-Pacific and Australian Families

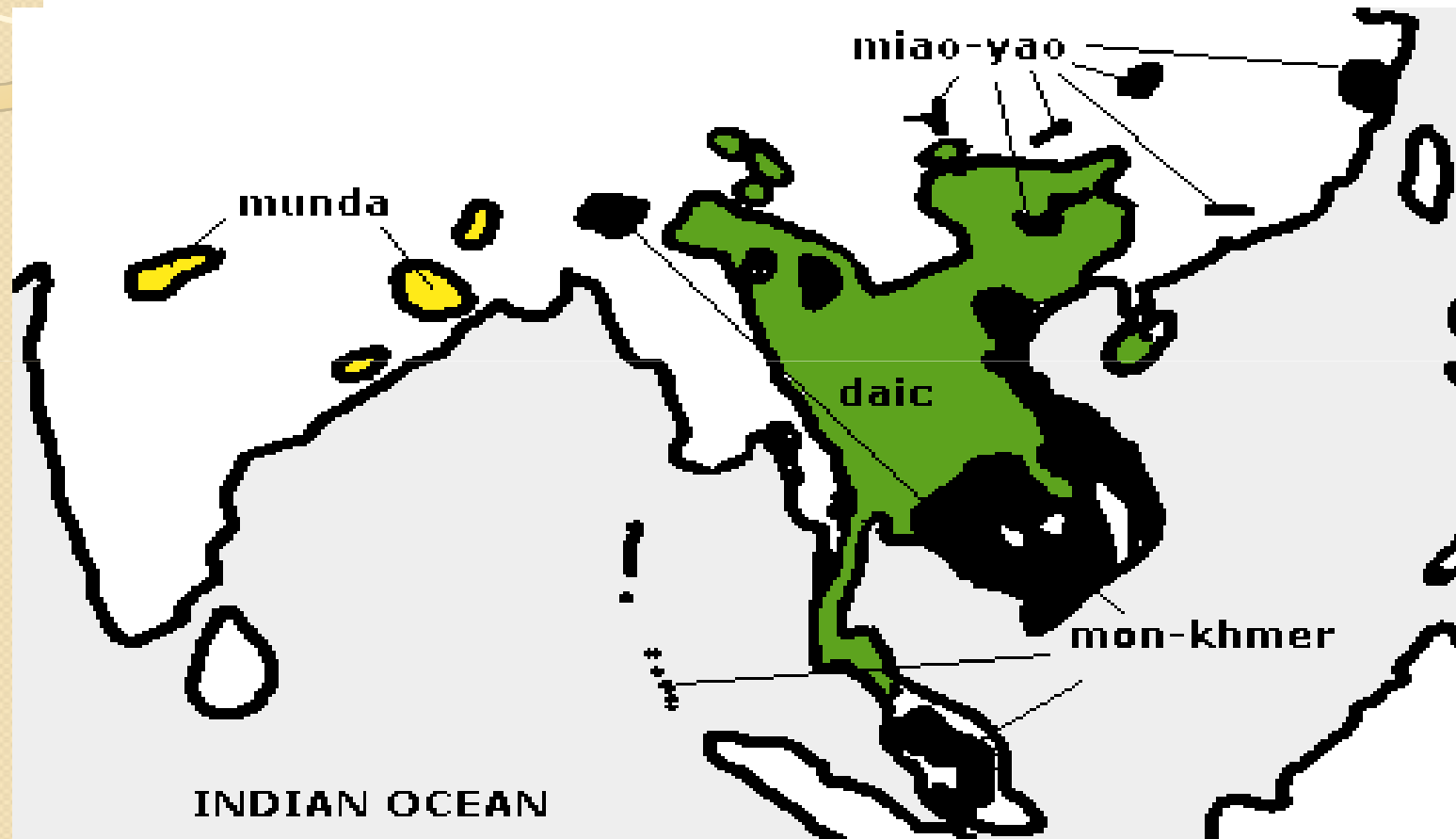




The Indo-Pacific and Australian Families

- There are about 700 languages in the Indo-Pacific family, most of them in the island of New Guinea, with about 3 million speakers.
- Many linguists are not at all convinced that all these languages are related. In fact, a number of them have yet to be studied!
- On the other hand, some believe that the family may include Tasmanian, now extinct.
- Possibly related are the 170 languages of the Australian aborigines. Sadly, there are only about 30,000 native speakers left.

The Miao-Yao, Austro-Asiatic, and Daic Families





The Miao-Yao, Austro-Asiatic, and Daic Families

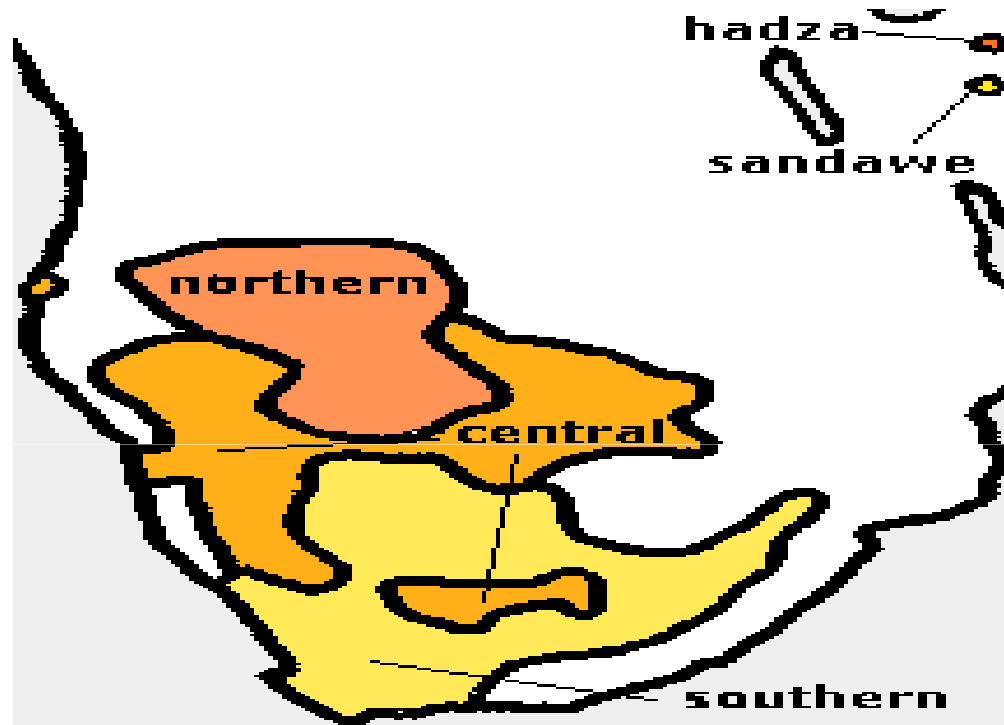
- Austro-Asiatic (Munda in India and Mon-Khmer in southeast Asia) has 150 languages and 60 million speakers, including Vietnamese.
- Miao-Yao consists of four languages with seven million speakers, scattered all over southern China and southeast Asia generally.
- Daic has some 60 languages with 50 million speakers, especially Thai (Siamese).
- These three language families are sometimes grouped with the Austronesian family (below) into a "superfamily" called Austric. On the other hand, some linguists consider Miao-Yao and Daic relatives of Chinese.



Language family of africa

- Niger congo and khosian

The Khoisan Family



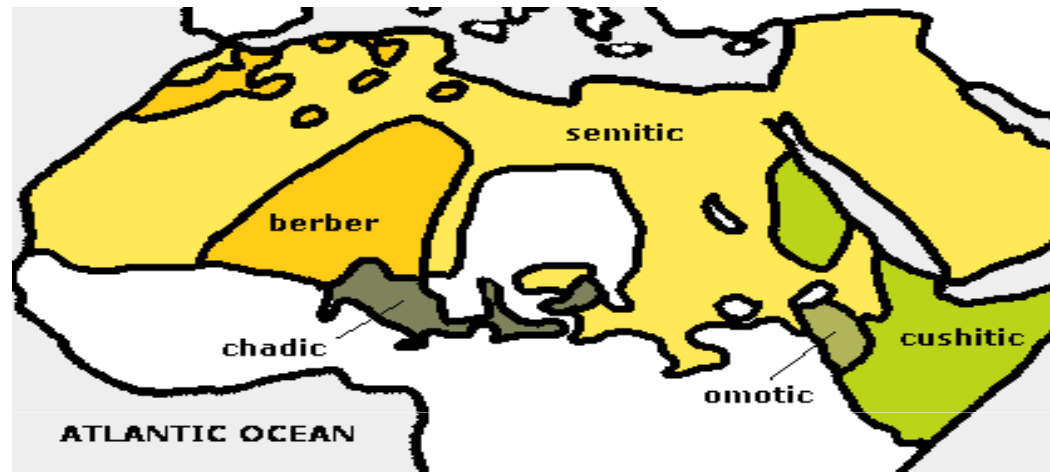
- About 30 languages with about 100,000 speakers, the Khoisan family includes the people we call the Bushmen and the Hottentots.

The Niger-Kordofanian Family



- The largest sub-Saharan African family of languages, it includes some 1,000 languages with close to 200 million speakers. Best known are Mandinka, Swahili, Yoruba, and Zulu.

The Afro-Asiatic Family



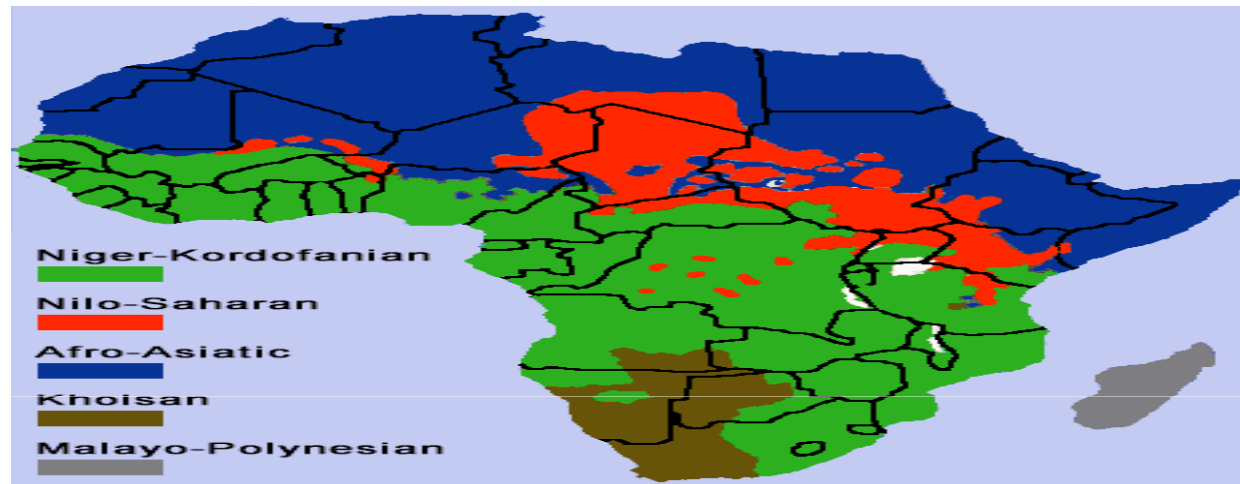
- The **Afro-Asiatic language family** has the following five **branches of living** languages,: **Berber, Chadic, Cushitic, Omotic, and Semitic.**
- This is a major language group, with 240 languages and 250 million speakers. It includes ancient Egyptian, Hebrew, and Aramaic, as well as the great Nigerian language Hausa. The many dialects of Arabic alone are spoken by as many as 200 million people.

The Nilo-Saharan Family



- The **Nilo-Saharan languages** are spoken by more than 30 million people in fifteen African countries, from Tanzania in the east as far as Mali in the west.
- The family has four branches: **Songay (or Songhai), Saharan, Kuliak, and Satellite-Core**

Niger-Congo languages



- With its 1 436 languages—according to the most recent estimates—the **Niger-Congo** or **Niger-Kordofanian language family is the largest in the world, and it occupies a greater part of the African continent than any other family**
- It is a classification with seven main branches: **Kordofanian, Mande, Atlantic, Ijoid, Dogon, North Volta-Congo, and South Volta-Congo.**



Language family of the Americas

- North american indian
- Eskimo-aleut and athabascan
- Algoquian
- Iroquoian and Muskogean
- Siquan and uto-aztecan
- Mayan
- South American Indian

The Eskimo-Aleut Family



- The Eskimo-Aleut family consists of nine languages, spoken by about 85,000 people. The Inuit today play an important role in the governing of Greenland (Kalaallit Nunaat) and the Canadian territory of Nunavut.

The Amerind Family (North America)





The Amerind Family (North America)

- Although many linguists do not accept the idea that all North and South American Indian languages (other than the Na-Dene and Eskimo-Aleut) can be classified into one family, it is often accepted for convenience sake.
- Amerind includes nearly 600 languages, with more than 20 million speakers. In North America, some of the best known names are Ojibwa and Cree, Dakota (or Sioux), Cherokee and Iroquois, Hopi and Nahuatl (or Aztec), and the Mayan languages.

The Amerind Family (South America)



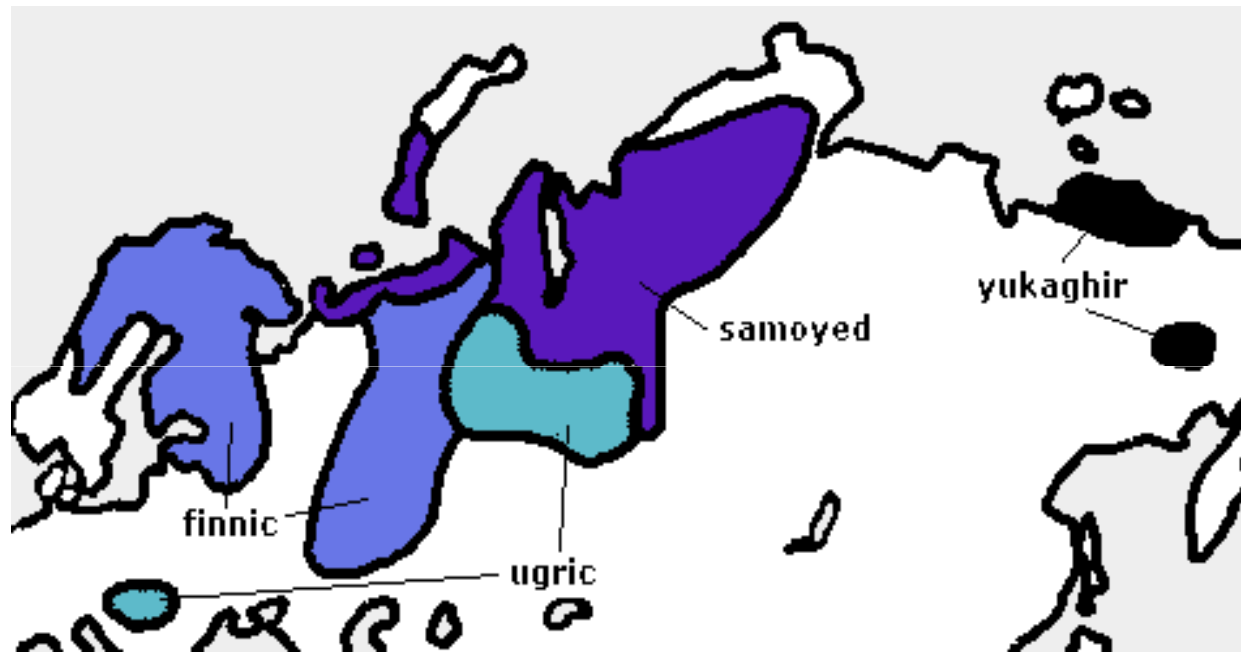
- The language map of South America includes some of the North American sub-families, and adds a few more. Well known languages include Quechua (Inca), Guarani, and Carib. The Andean language sub-family (which includes Quechua) numbers nearly nine million speakers!

The Na-Dene Family



- This family includes 34 languages spoken by about 200,000 people. Best known examples are Tlingit, Haida, Navaho, and Apache

The Uralic-Yukaghir Family



- There are about 20 languages with 20 million speakers in this family. Best known are Finnish, Estonian, Hungarian, and Saami, the language of the Laplanders.

The Chukchi-Kamchatkan ("Paleosiberian") Family



- Perhaps the smallest family, this one includes 5 languages with 23,000 speakers in the farthest northeastern reaches of Siberia. Many linguists consider these two unrelated families.

