

# Language, Culture, and Society

LNG 1100

*Week 1*

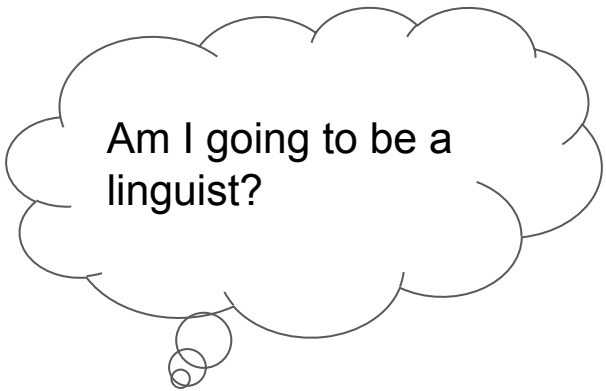
*Overview of Linguistics*

# Join this course on OpenLab

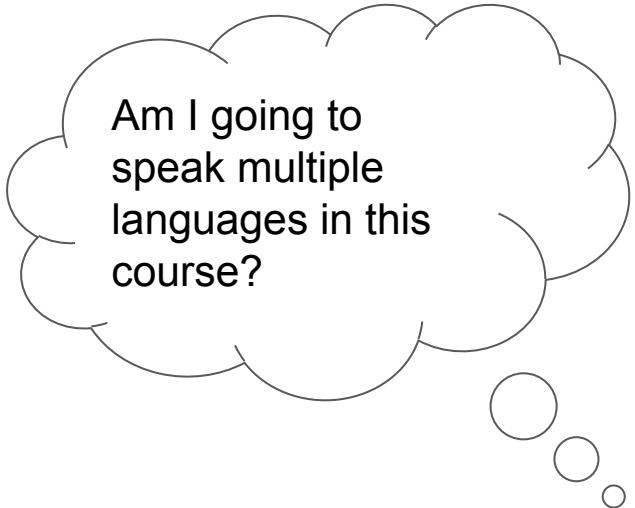
1. Visit [City Tech OpenLab](#)
2. Open an account
3. Search the course “LNG1100” + “Fall 2018”
4. Join the course and check it at least two times a week for course readings, updates and announcements.

**Please (1) join this course on OpenLab and  
(2) purchase the textbook by today.**

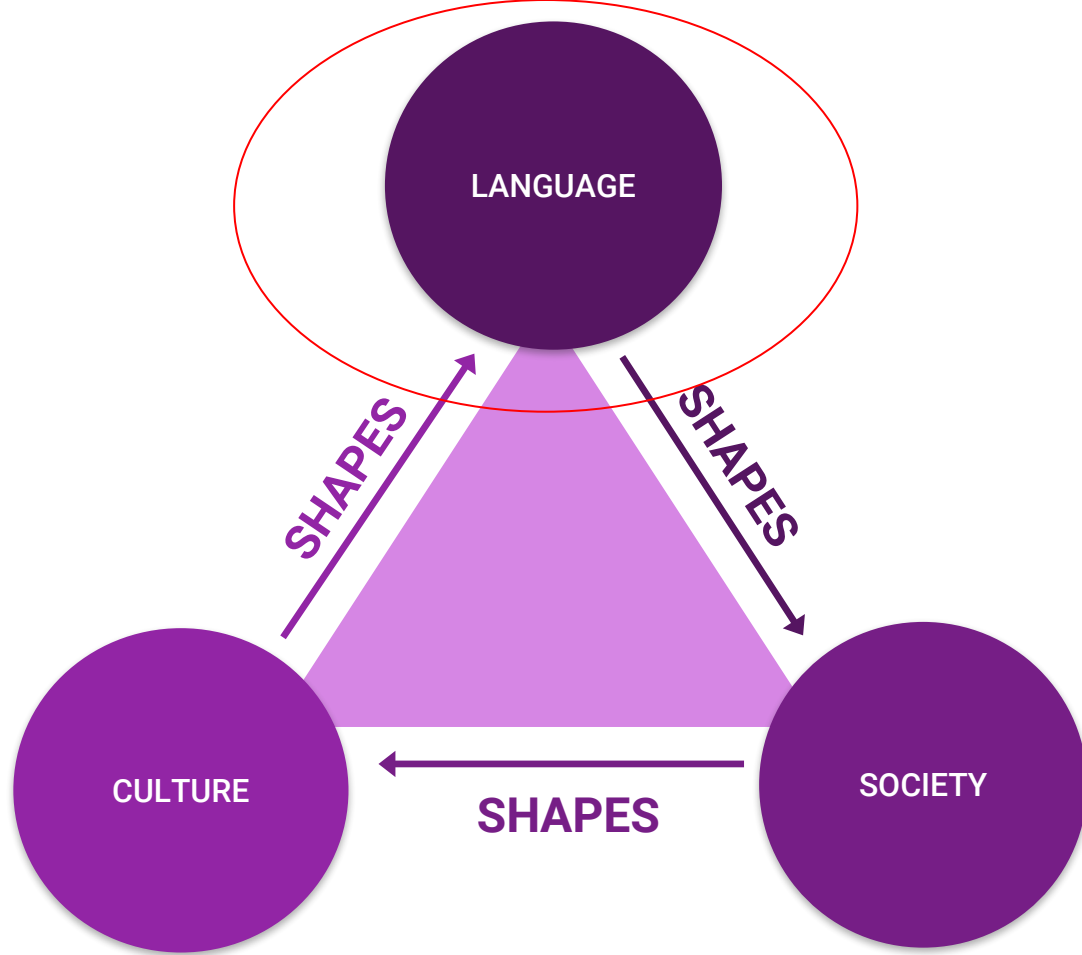
# What is this course about?

A thought bubble with a cloud-like main body and two small circles at the bottom left.

Am I going to be a linguist?

A thought bubble with a cloud-like main body and three small circles at the bottom right.

Am I going to speak multiple languages in this course?



# Areas of study

~~Linguists speak many languages.~~

1. Phonetics and phonology
2. Morphology
3. Syntax
4. Semantics and Pragmatics

Phonetics is the study of the production and perception of *actual sounds* of human languages, their production and their perception.

Phonology on the other hand is the study of sound *systems*, the patterning of sounds.

# Vowels

## Monophthongs

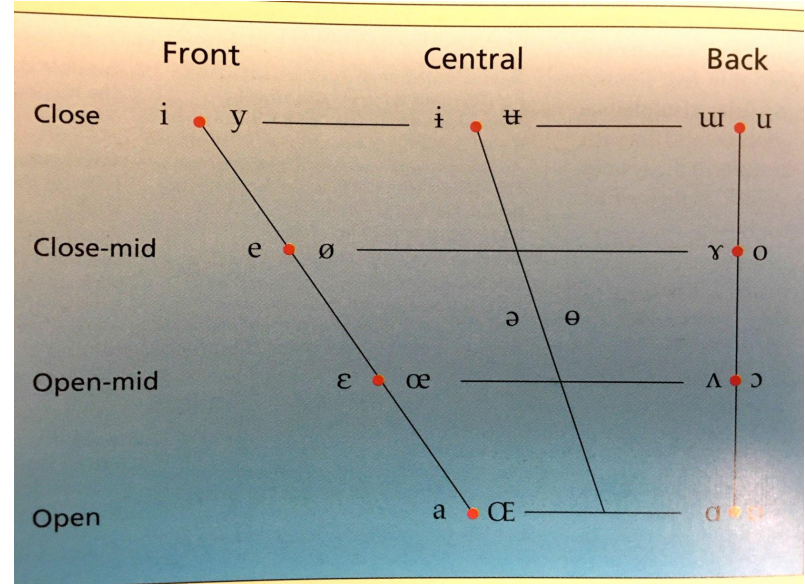
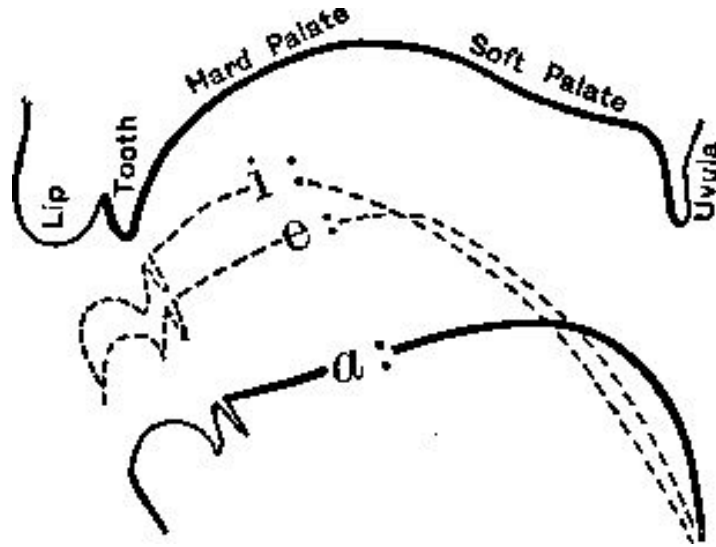
## Diphthongs

<i>The vowels in</i>	<i>Gimson</i>	<i>Jones</i>	<i>F&amp;R</i>	<i>Variants</i>
sea, feet, me, field	i:	i:	i	
him, big, village, women	ɪ	ɪ	ɪ	ɪ
get, fetch, head, Thames	e	e	ɛ	
sat, hand, ban, plait	æ	æ	æ	a
sun, son, blood, does	ʌ	ʌ	ʌ	
calm, are, father, car	ɑ:	ɑ:	ɑ	
dog, lock, swan, cough	ɒ	ɔ	ɑ	
all, saw, cord, more	ɔ:	ɔ:	ɔ	
put, wolf, good, look	ʊ	u	ʊ	ʊ
soon, do, soup, shoe	u:	u:	u	
bird, her, turn, learn	ɜ:	ɜ:	ʌ (+ r)	ɜ~ (+ r)
the, butter, sofa, about	ə	ə	ə	ə~ (+ r)
ape, waist, they, say	eɪ	eɪ	e	
time, cry, die, high	aɪ	aɪ	ay	
boy, toy, noise, voice	ɔɪ	ɔɪ	ɔy	
so, road, toe, know	əʊ	ou	o	
out, how, house, found	aʊ, ɑʊ	au	aw, æw	
deer, here, fierce, near	ɪə	ɪə	(i + r)	
care, air, bare, bear	eə	ɛə	(ɛ + r)	
poor, sure, tour, lure	ʊə	uə	(u + r)	

Group A

Group B

# Organs of articulation and vowels





# Consonants

## TRANSCRIBING CONSONANTS

**A** British and an American transcription system for consonants:

A. C. Gimson (1962) and V. Fromkin & R. Rodman (1974) (details on p. 237). □

<i>The consonants in</i>	<i>Gimson</i>	<i>F&amp;R</i>	<i>The consonants in</i>	<i>Gimson</i>	<i>F&amp;R</i>
pie, up	p	p	so, us	s	s
by, ebb	b	b	zoo, ooze	z	z
tie, at	t	t	shoe, ash	ʃ	š
die, odd	d	d	genre, rouge	ʒ	ž
coo, ache	k	k	he	h	h
go, egg	g	g	me, am	m	m
chew, each	tʃ	č, tš	no, in	n	n
jaw, edge	dʒ	ǰ, dž	hang	ŋ	ŋ
fee, off	f	f	lie, eel	l	l
view, of	v	v	row, ear (not RP)	r	r
thigh, oath	θ	θ	way	w	w
they, booth	ð	ð	you	j	y

Accents can also be the subject of a popular song:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yQWbqeYsqp8> (0:38)

# From linguistics to sociolinguistics

1. What are some accents in the US? What causes “an accent”?
2. Pay attention to how Awkwafina talks in this trailer of “Crazy Rich Asians”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZQ-YX-5bAs0> (1:12)

An interesting tweet about the accent:

<https://twitter.com/DecolonialBlack/status/1033162120437878784>

# Areas of study

1. Phonetics and phonology
2. Morphology/lexicology
3. Syntax
4. Semantics and Pragmatics

# Vocabulary / Lexicon

## Portuguese “thank you” - ***gender marking***

1. Obrigadaa
2. Obrigadoo

Definition of *google* in English:

**google** 



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**VERB**

[WITH OBJECT]

Search for information about (someone or something) on the Internet using the search engine Google.

*‘on Sunday she googled an ex-boyfriend’*

*[no object] ‘I googled for a cheap hotel/flight deal’*

[+ More example sentences](#)

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### Origin

1990s: from Google, the proprietary name of the search engine.

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### Pronunciation

**google** /ˈguːgl/ 

# Politically correct language

## Understanding the relationship between language use and ideology

Politically correct (PC) language. Below are some examples of so-called PC language. What beliefs about the relationship between language and culture are reflected in the suggestion and adoption of or resistance to PC language?

1. Husband/Wife → Partner
2. Policemen → Police officers
3. Waiter/Waitress → Server
4. Blacklisted → Banned
5. Disabled → Differently-abled
6. American Indians → Native Americans
7. Merry Christmas → Happy Holidays

# From linguistics to sociolinguistics

- Can we use “dude” or “guys” to address women?

<https://www.theatlantic.com/family/archive/2018/08/guys-gender-neutral/568231/>

# Areas of study

1. Phonetics and phonology
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# Syntax

The word syntax has been derived from the Greek word Syntaxis, which literally means “a putting together” or “arrangement”. It studies how words are combined to form a sentence.

Las Vegas gunman  
Stephen Paddock enjoyed  
gambling, country music,  
lived quiet life before  
massacre

Las Vegas gunman  
Stephen Paddock enjoyed  
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## WHITE SUSPECT

Straight-A student plots to bomb high school

In 2008, 18-year-old Ryan Schallenger was accused of plotting to bomb his South Carolina high school. Ohio's **Chronicle Telegram** wanted readers to know that he was a straight-A student, running an AP story with this headline.

## BLACK VICTIM

Shooting victim had many run-ins with  
law

And according to the **Omaha World-Herald**, this is what you needed to know about Julius B. Vaughn, a 19-year-old gunned down in Omaha last year:

# Areas of study

1. Phonetics and phonology
2. Morphology
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# Pragmatics

Pragmatics is the study of the use of language in **context**. Pragmatics deals with *how language is used*.

Two funerals and a wedding:  
The shunning of Donald  
Trump



New direction for Gates  
Foundation aims to build on  
progress in L.A. schools



Who is Carlo Maria Viganò,  
the man accusing Pope  
Francis of covering up sex...



FBI to talk to Rep. Maxine  
Waters' opponent about  
tweeting of fake letter



Climate  
deadlier  
and cos



Justin Chon in his film "Gook," which is set during the 1992 L.A. riots. (Ante Cheng / Sundance Institute)

# Bailey (1997, 2000)

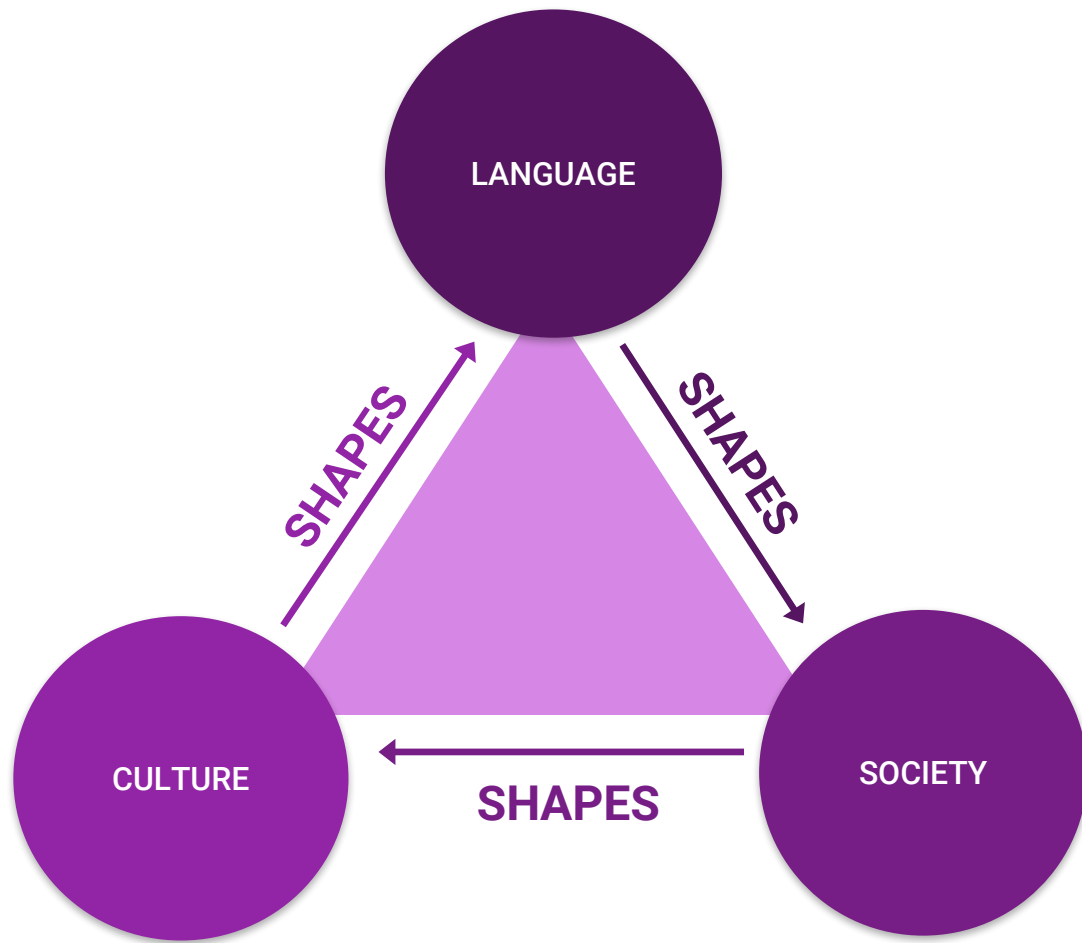
- Conflicts between Koreans and African Americans

Face-to-face interaction between Korean immigrant retailers and African-American customers in Los Angeles often leaves members of each group feeling as if the other has behaved in insultingly inappropriate ways. [Studying liquor store encounters] reveal **divergent communicative patterns** between immigrant Koreans and African-Americans, [which explains] negative attributions that they make about each other. I argue that the differing forms of participation documented in service encounters - and the ways in which they are interpreted - are simultaneously a result of (1) **cultural and linguistic differences between storekeepers and customers in service encounter behavior and expectations**; and (2) social inequality in America, which shapes both the local context in which these encounters occur and the social assumptions that storekeepers and customers bring to the stores.

# Pragmatics - varies from culture to culture, as well as from subculture to subculture

An excerpt from *Time* magazine:

- My daughter came home from a semester at a small liberal-arts college with a new vocabulary—the kind that pundits like to mock these days. Words like microaggression, intersectionality, trigger warning, nonbinary and cisgender migrated from her campus right into my living room....
- When she told me that her co-op dorm had proposed a ban on any comments regarding bodies and appearance—even something nice—I almost laughed. "So wait, you can't say, 'Hey, you look great,' to someone?" I asked. Nope, said daughter: "There's a risk of it being damaging or hurtful or inviting comparison, even if it's complimentary."





# The syllabus

# Sociolinguistic Autobiography

# Next class Aug 30

1. Please download readings required from Course website on CityTech Open Lab <https://openlab.citytech.cuny.edu>
2. Be prepared for the first quiz.

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# Language Genealogy and Language Families

# Quiz #1 (open book)

# Language origin and families

Where does language come from? Did humans all speak the same language at one point in time?

*Do you know the story of Babel?*



# Language genealogy

- Genealogy - the study and tracing of lines of development
- Language genealogy - the study and tracing of the development of languages
- According to Ethnologue, there are **6,909** languages actively spoken and signed.
- We didn't know if these languages originated from ONE language, but we do know that thousands of languages have **developed from what was once a much smaller number.**

# Major language families in the world

By population of speakers

1. Indo-European
2. Afro-Asiatic
3. Sino-Tibetan
4. Niger-Congo
5. Austronesian

By number of languages in the family

1. Niger-Congo
2. Austronesian
3. Afro-Asiatic
4. Sino-Tibetan
5. Indo-European

<https://www.ethnologue.com/statistics/family>

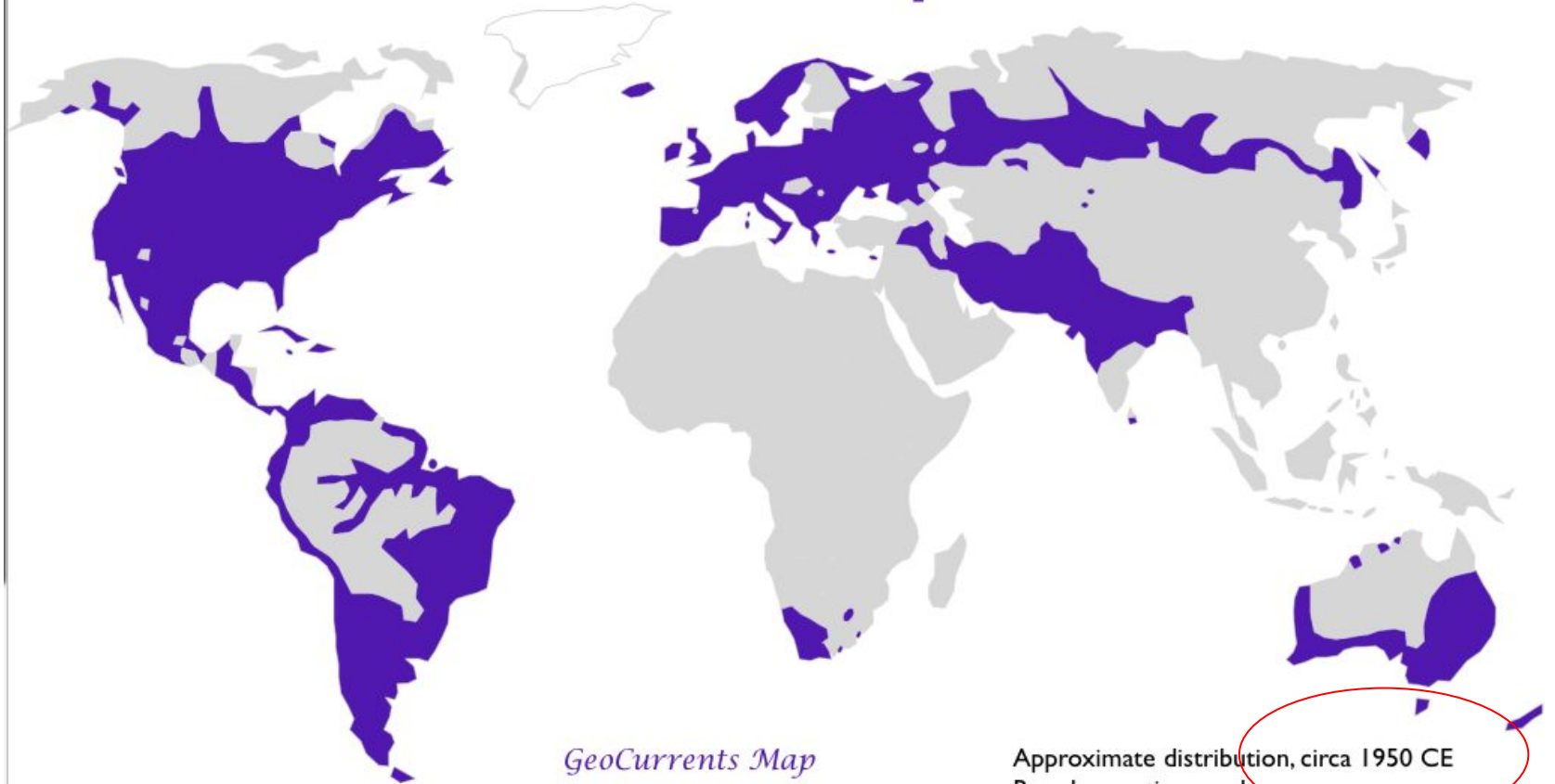
Other language families:

Uralic (e.g. Finnish), Turkic (e.g. Turkish), Japonic (e.g. Japanese)



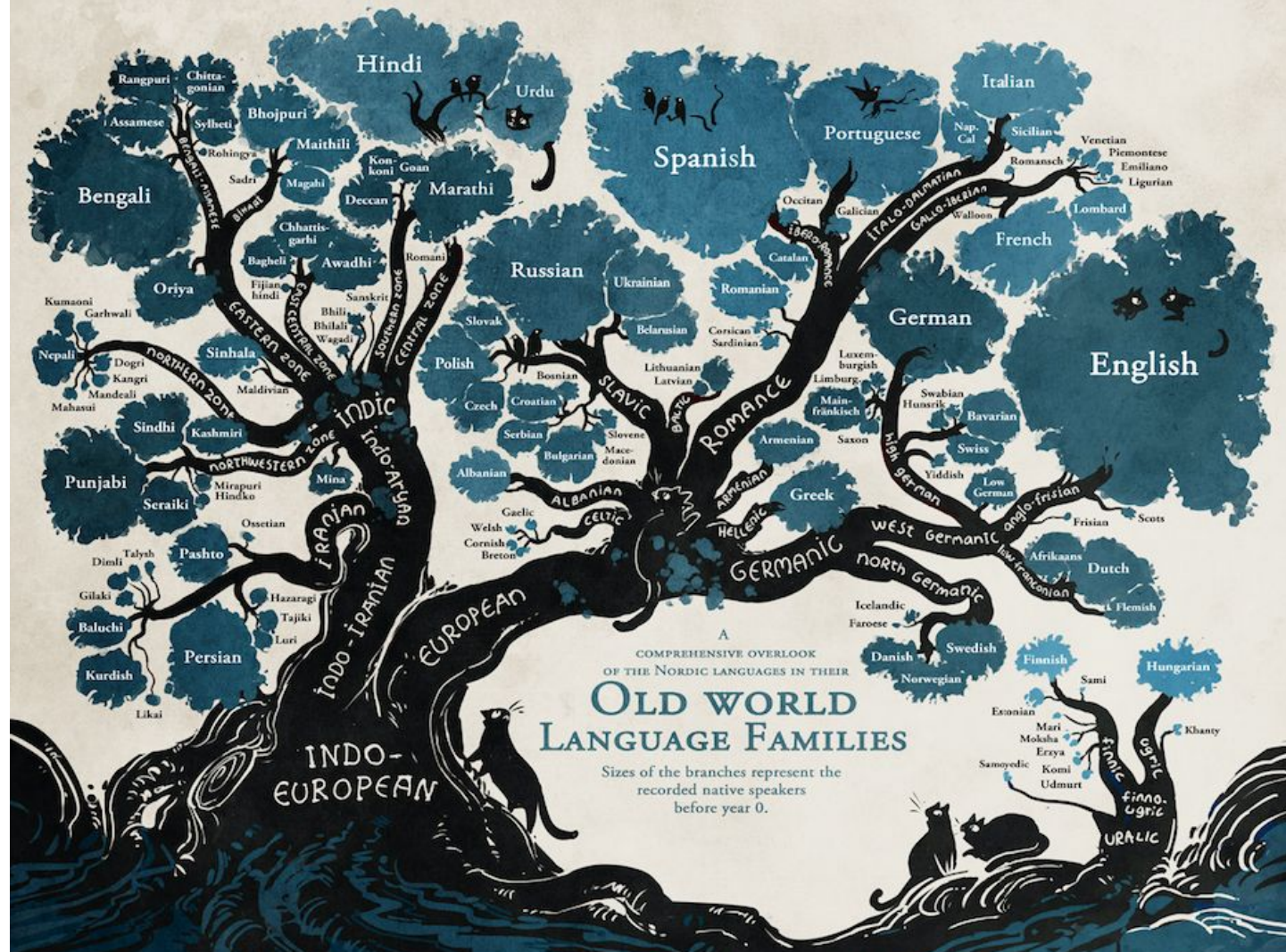
# World Language Families

## ***Indo-European***



*GeoCurrents Map*

Approximate distribution, circa 1950 CE  
Based on native speakers



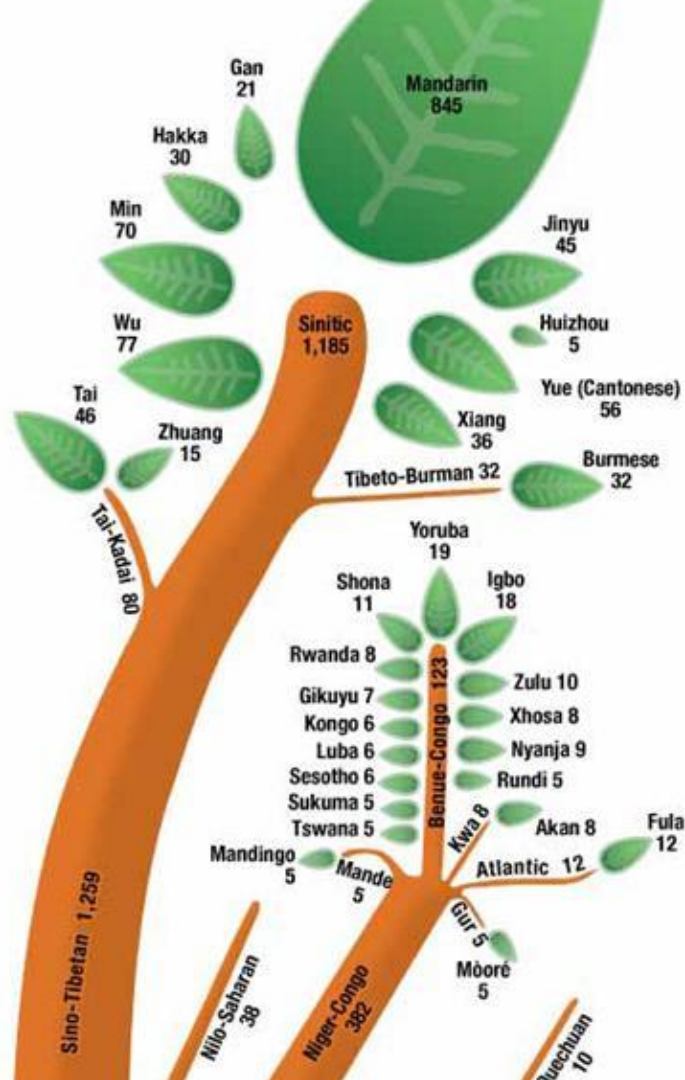
# World Language Families

## ***Afro-Asiatic***



*GeoCurrents Map*

Approximate distribution, circa 1950 CE  
Based on native speakers





# World Language Families

## ***Niger-Congo***



*GeoCurrents Map*

Approximate distribution, circa 1950 CE  
Based on native speakers

# World Language Families

## ***Austronesian***

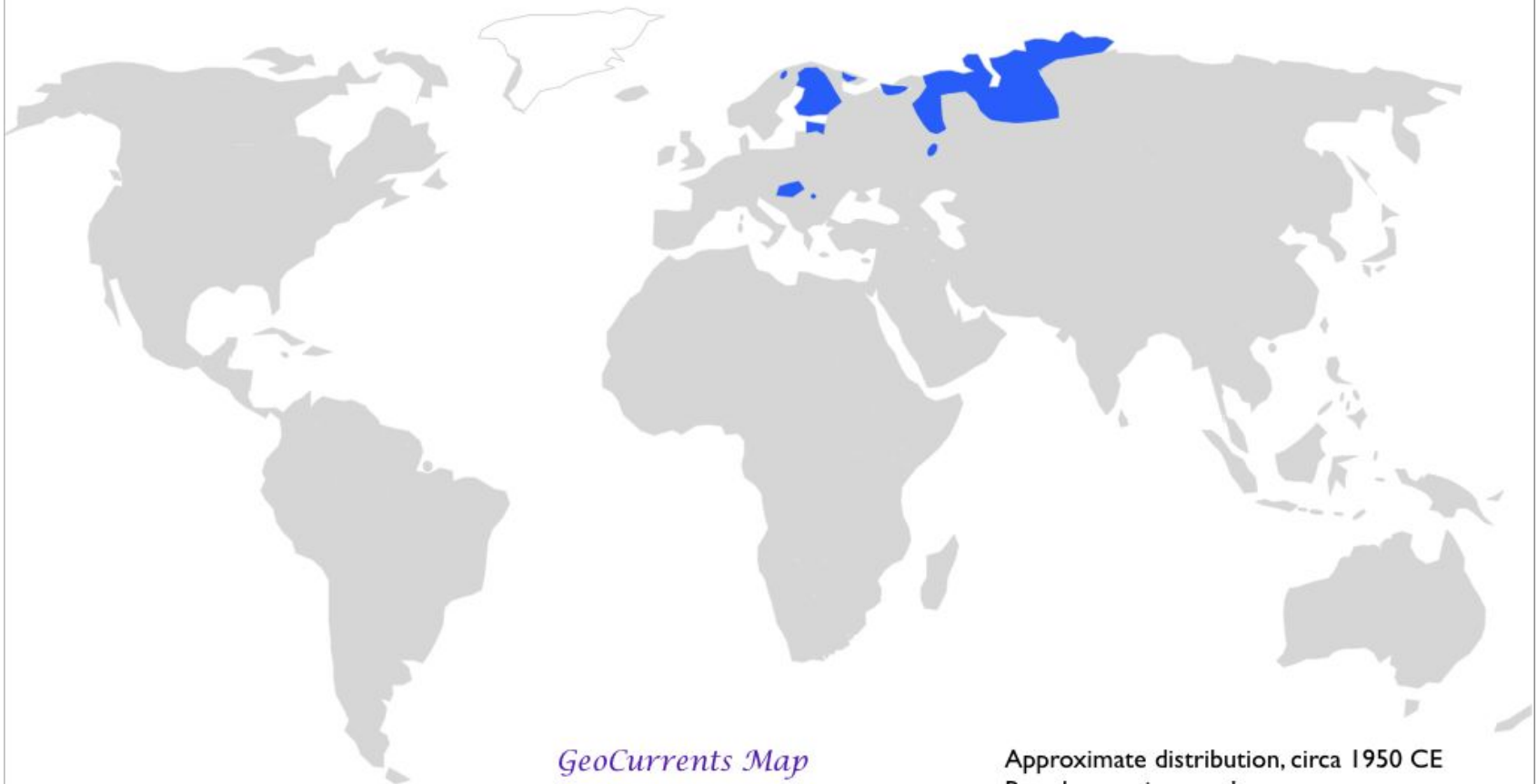


*GeoCurrents Map*

Approximate distribution, circa 1950 CE  
Based on native speakers

# World Language Families

## ***Uralic***

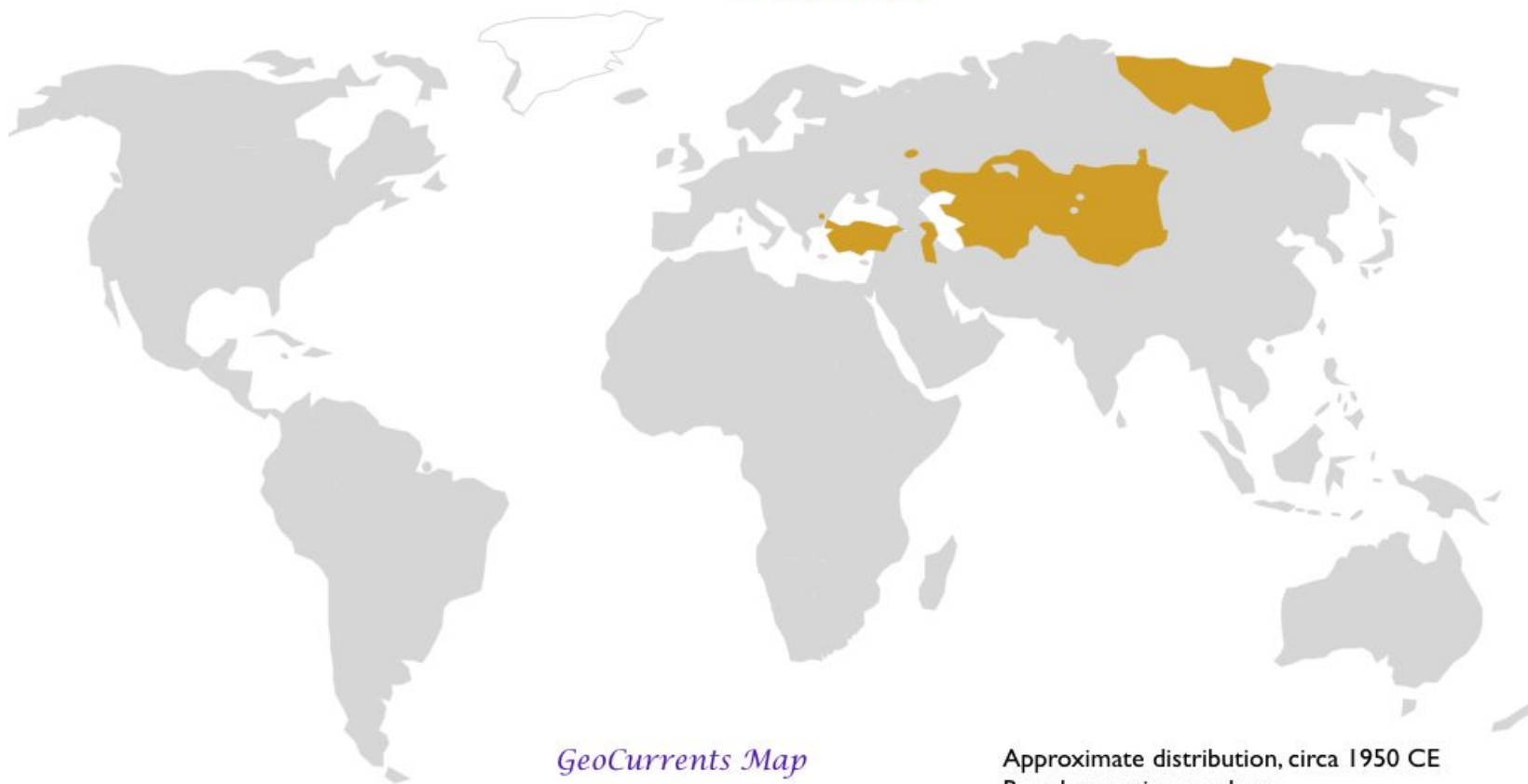


*GeoCurrents Map*

Approximate distribution, circa 1950 CE  
Based on native speakers

# World Language Families

## *Turkic*

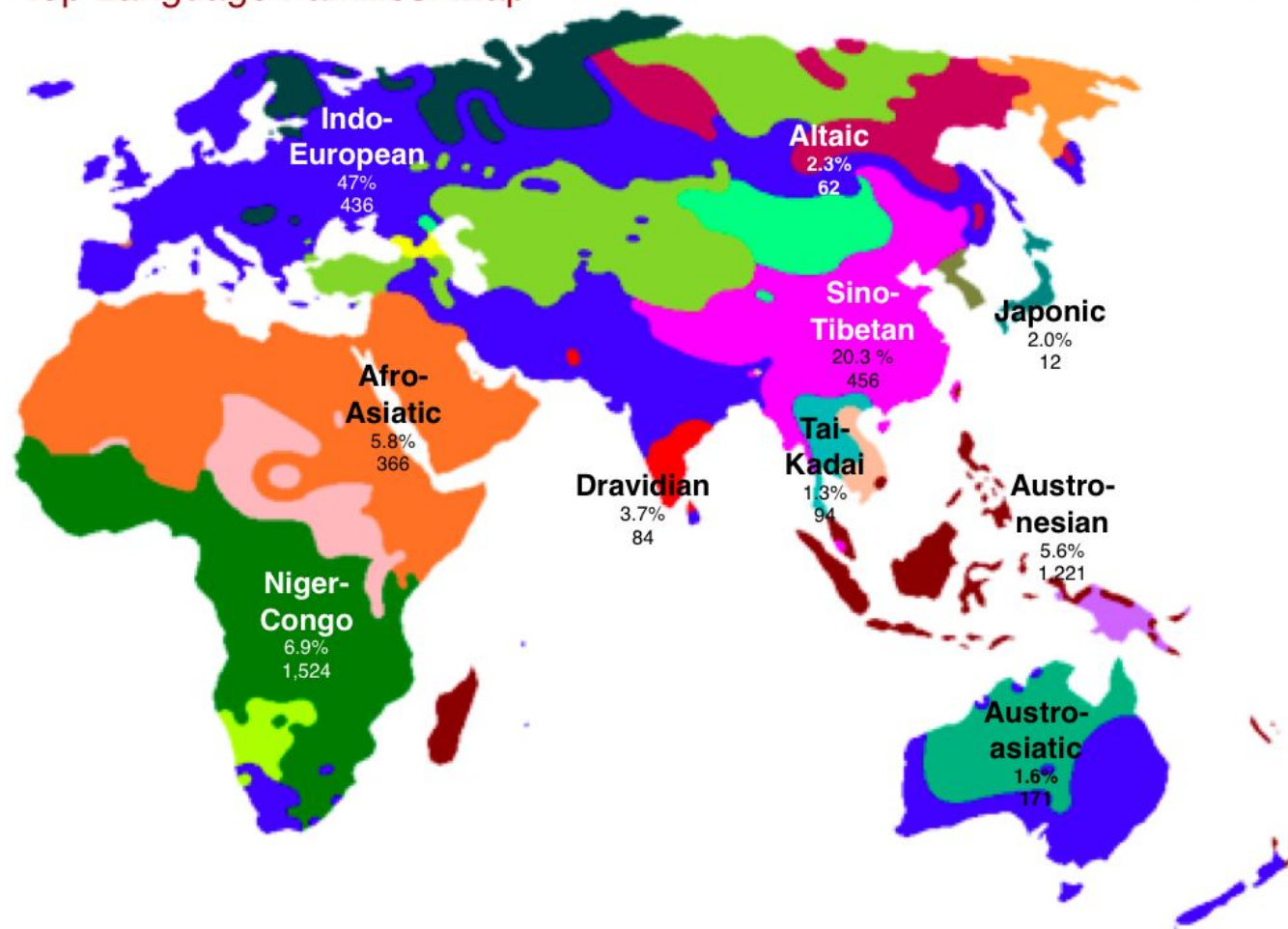


*GeoCurrents Map*

Approximate distribution, circa 1950 CE  
Based on native speakers



## Top Language Families: Map



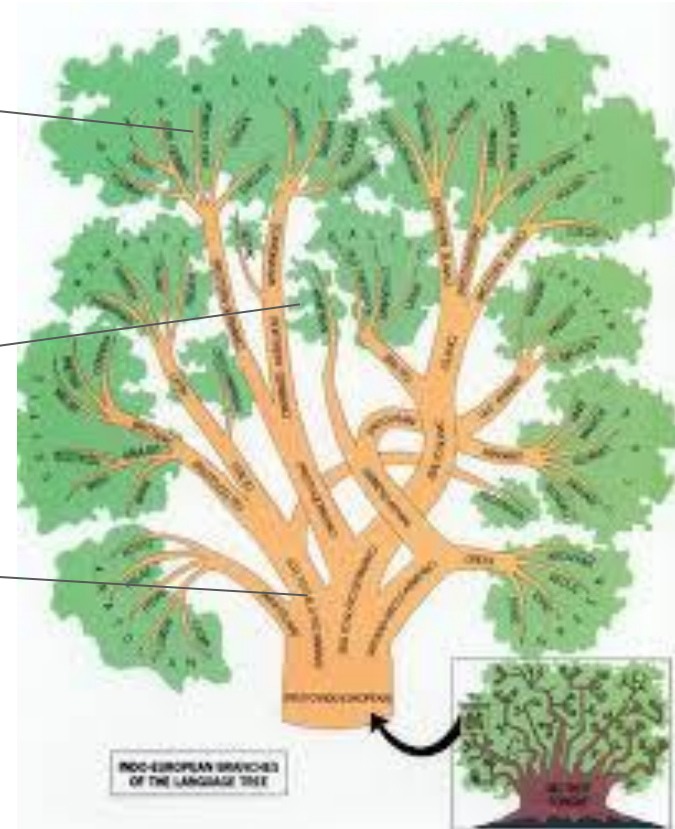
# Language tree - a metaphor/representation of development of languages

- Some languages derived from the same “ancestor” or “parent” language.
- Linguists have often used trees and branches as metaphors to explain the connections between languages

**Leaves** - Modern languages

**Branches** -  
Language groups  
(e.g. Romance,  
Germanic, Slavic)

**Trunk** - (Proto)  
Language family



# Class activity 1 - Find your language family

Study the handout of language family trees.

1. Find the language(s) you speak on the map and then identify their language families. Are they close relatives?
2. Share your answer with your group. Does everyone's first language and second language belong to the same language family or to different language families?

# Class Activity 2

- These are the six official languages at the United Nations:
  - Arabic → Afro-Asiatic
  - Chinese → Sino-Tibetan
  - English → Germanic → Indo-European
  - French → Romance → Indo-European
  - Russian → Slavic → Indo-European
  - Spanish → Romance → Indo-European

*What is the language group and family each of these languages belong to?*

# The origin of the term “Indo-European”

## From Encyclopedia Britannica

Of Welsh parentage, philologist Sir **William Jones** studied at Harrow and University College, Oxford (1764–68), and learned Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Arabic, and Persian. By the end of his life, he had learned 28 languages, including Chinese, often by teaching himself.

He was appointed a judge in Calcutta, India. While he lived there, he became proficient in Sanskrit, and found that **Sanskrit is in fact related to European languages such as Greek and Latin.**

**(Philology** is the study of language in written historical sources)

# Indo-European



# Video: How languages evolve

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iWDKsHm6gTA>

1. What factors cause languages to change and to develop?
2. How can linguists determine whether languages are related?
3. What are the challenges that linguists face when they try to construct a language tree?

# Think like a linguist - An illustration of comparative linguistics

Linguists can look at **grammar** and **vocabulary** to determine if two languages are related.

An example of comparing vocabulary words:

*Which languages are more related?*



ENGLISH	ICELANDIC	DANISH	NORWEGIAN	SWEDISH	FINNISH
home	heim	hjem	hjem	hem	koti
language	tungumál	sprog	språk	språk	kieli
north	norður	nord	nord	nord	pohjoinen
island	eyja	ø	øy	ö	saari
strong	sterkur	stærk	sterk	stark	vahva
weak	veikur	svag	svak	svag	heikko
day	dagur	dag	dag	dag	päivä
night	nótt	nat	natt	natt	yö
snow	snjór	sne	snø	snö	lumi
wind	vindur	vind	vind	vind	tuuli



INDO-EUROPEAN · NORTH GERMANIC

### ICELANDIC

An archaic language that greatly resembles the old Norse spoken by the ancient vikings. The scandinavian languages were also born out of old Norse, but are no longer mutually intelligible with Icelandic.

INDO-EUROPEAN · NORTH GERMANIC · SCANDINAVIAN

### DANISH, NORWEGIAN, SWEDISH

Knowing one of the scandinavian languages is enough to understand all three, especially in written form. Spoken Danish can prove tricky to grasp particularly for Swedes, but Norwegian bridges the gap between Danish and Swedish.

URALIC · FINNO-UGRIC · FINNIC

### FINNISH

Not from the same language family as the other four Nordic languages. Absolute gibberish.



Lingering questions -  
Geography can't account for  
variation in the same region

- The case of Finnish and Hungarian - Uralic
- They are not related to the languages of their neighboring countries.







## More lingering questions

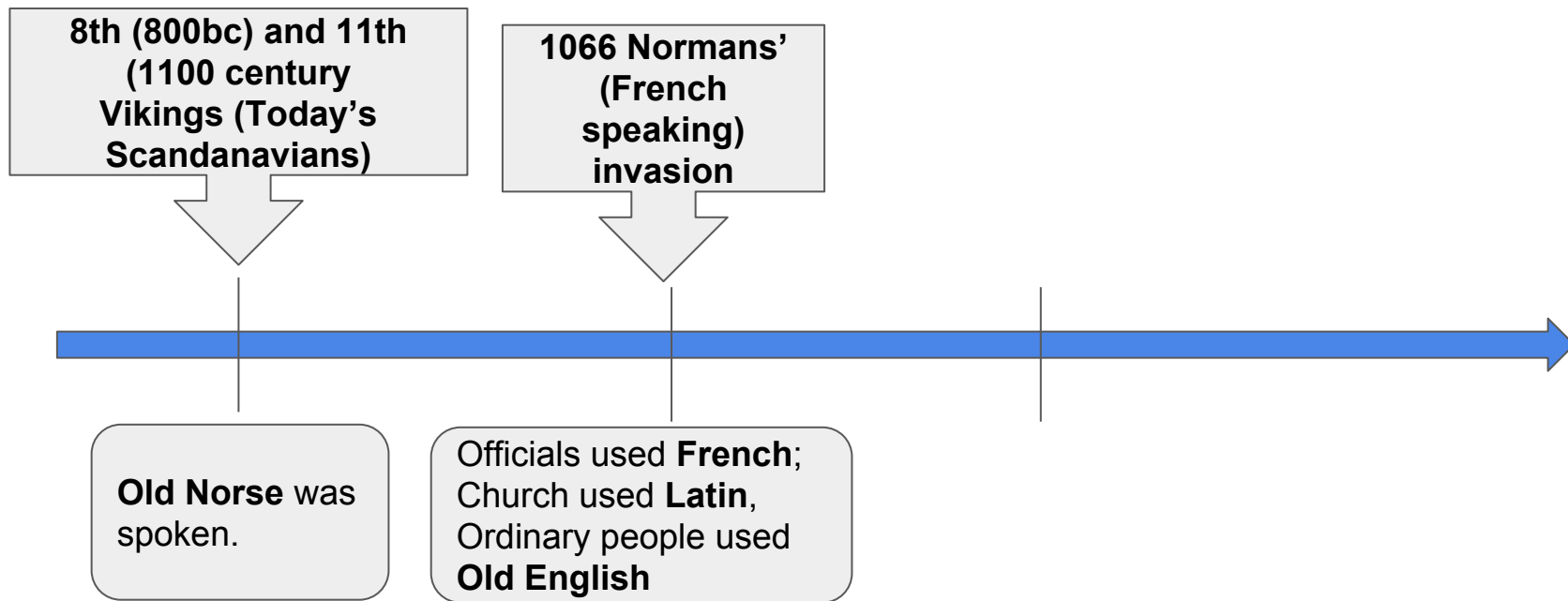
- Iran and Iraq are right next to each other, but their languages (Farsi and Arabic) are not related.
- However, names in Farsi and Arabic are very similar. Do you know why?

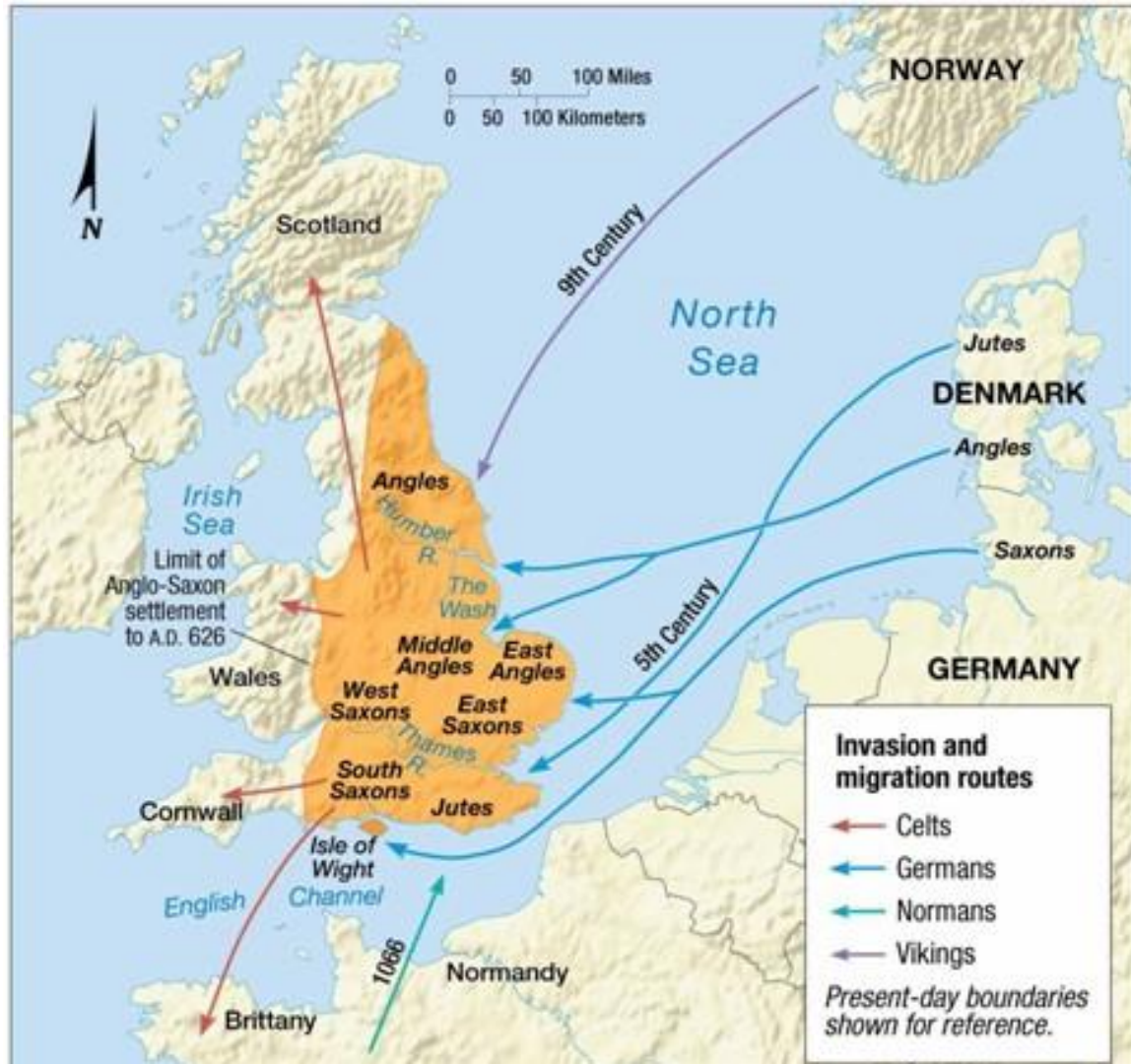


# Video: Where did English come from?

<https://ed.ted.com/lessons/where-did-english-come-from-claire-bowern>

*As you listen, try to construct a timeline of how English developed.*





# Checking your understanding

1. English shares many words with \_\_\_\_\_ because of borrowing.
  - a. Punjabi
  - b. Khmer
  - c. French
  - d. Navajo
  
2. English is a member of the \_\_\_\_\_ language group.
  - a. Germanic
  - b. Finno-Ugric
  - c. Viking
  - d. Latin

3. We can tell that languages are related to one another because \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. Scribes recorded when the languages split
- b. The language was written down
- c. They have some similar grammar
- d. They show regular consistent changes



# The case of English words

- Up to **85-90%** of the words in English are borrowed words.
- Guess the origin of the following words:
  - Kow-tow → Chinese
  - Baguette → French
  - Spaghetti → Italian
  - Antique → Latin
  - Yoga → Sanskrit
  - Sabbatical → Greek/Latin
  - Judge → French
  - Sky → Old Norse
- Did English come from German? Was it a German dialect?

**English, German**

*Modern languages*

**Proto-Germanic**

*An undocumented  
parent language (no  
longer spoken)*

**Proto-Indo-European**

*An undocumented  
parent language (no  
longer spoken)*



# Next week - Week 3

Read

- Denison and Hogg