

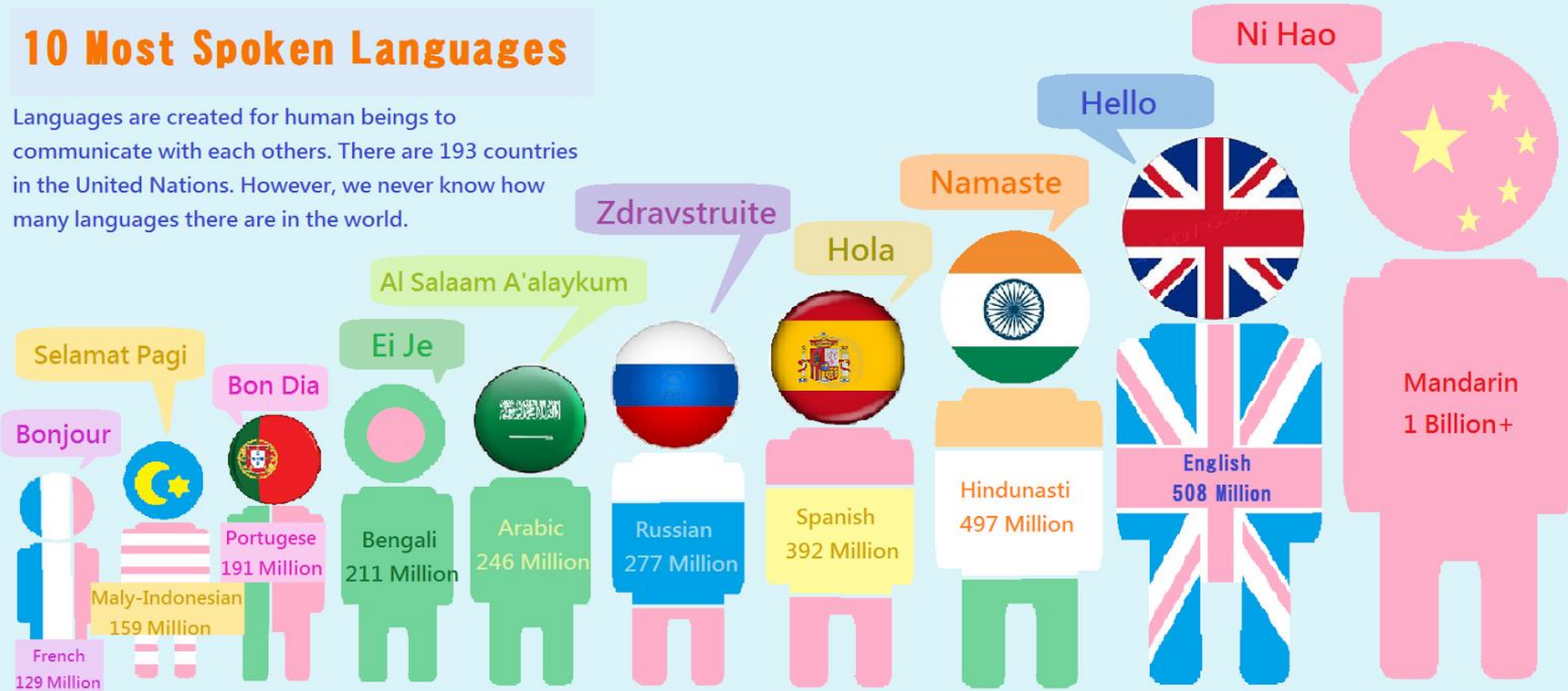


LANGUAGES REVIEW

Ch. 6

10 Most Spoken Languages

Languages are created for human beings to communicate with each others. There are 193 countries in the United Nations. However, we never know how many languages there are in the world.



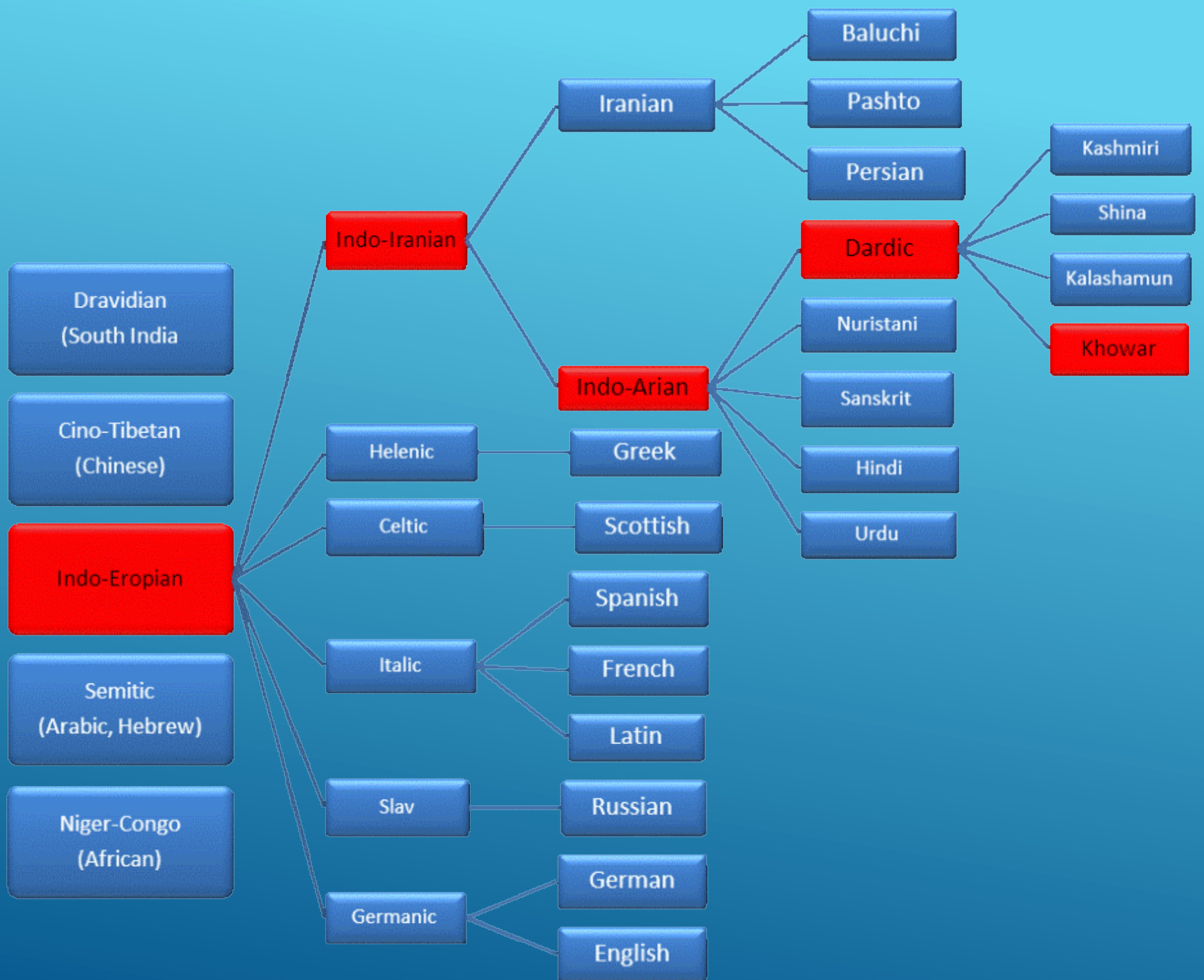
Sources: 1. <http://geography.about.com/cs/countries/a/numbercountries.htm> 2. <http://listverse.com/2008/06/26/top-10-most-spoken-languages-in-the-world/>

LANGUAGES BIG IDEAS

- Language
 - Language families
 - Dialects
 - Divergence
 - Convergence
- Diffusion of Language
- Distribution of Language Families
- Disappearance of Language
 - Endangered, extinct
- ▶ Revived & artificial languages
- Spatial Interactions
 - Lingua Franca, Pidgin, Creole
- Toponym

WHAT IS LANGUAGE?

- A system of **communication** through speech, a collection of **sounds** that a group of people understands to have the same **meaning**.
- Many **countries** designate at least one **official language** to be used for official documents & public objects - i.e. road signs & money.
- Organized into:
 - **Families** - collection related through common ancestral language
 - Branches - **collection** within a family.
 - **Groups** - collection within a branch that share common origin in the relatively recent past. Display **similar** grammar & vocabulary



LANGUAGE FAMILIES

- At the **global** scale, we classify languages into language **families**.
 - The languages have a **shared** but fairly distant origin
- Families are broken down into **Sub** families
 - **Division** within a language family
 - Commonalities are more definite & origins are more recent.
 - Consist of individual **languages**
 - Smaller **spatial** extent

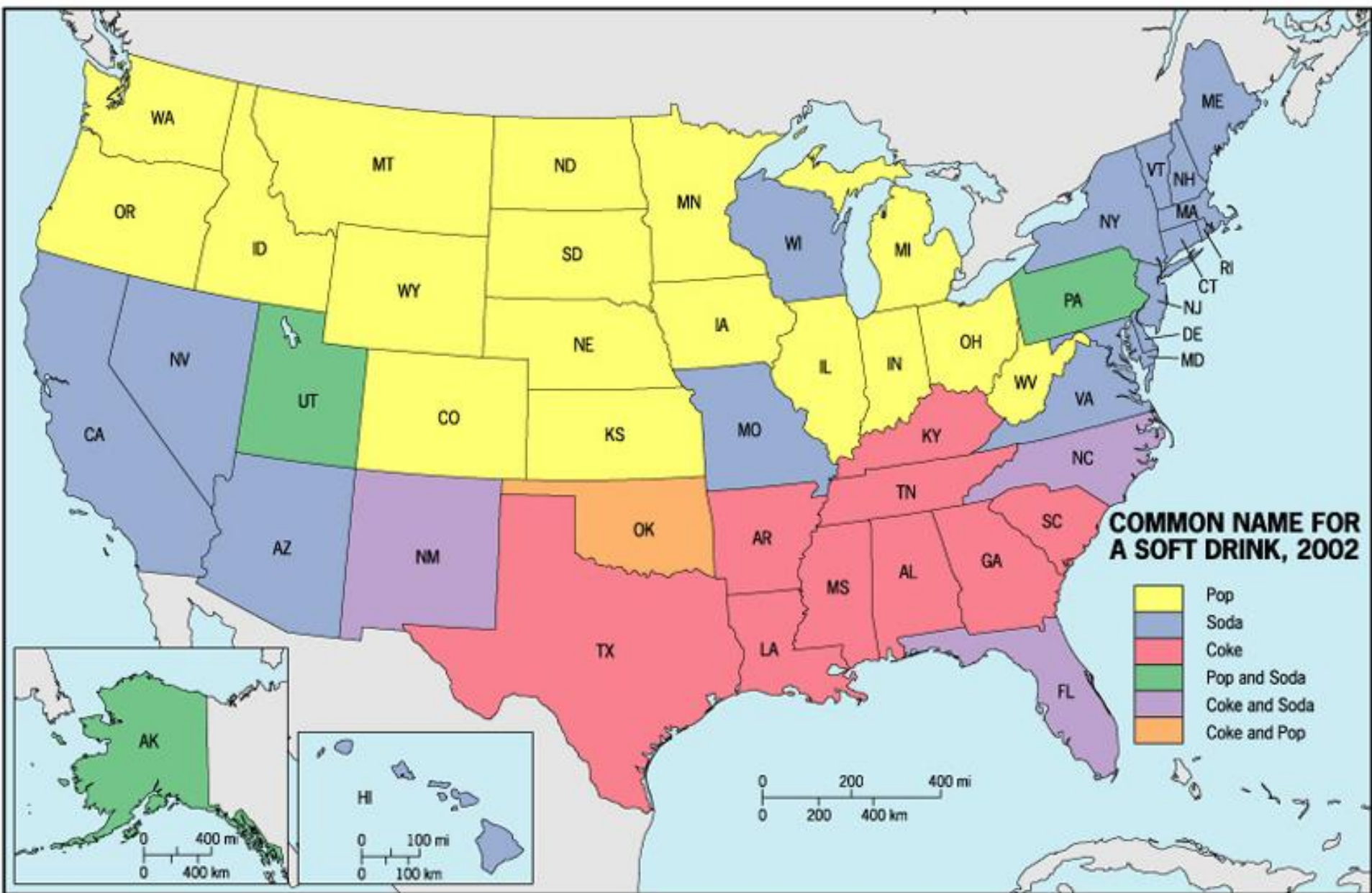
CLASSIFICATION OF LANGUAGES

- **2/3** of the worlds population speak a language that belongs to the **Indo-European** or Sino-Tibetan language family
- **2 - 6%** of the worlds population speak a language that fits into one of **seven** other language families
- **Remainder** of population speaks a language belonging to one of **100** smaller families



DIALECTS

- **Variants** of a standard language along **regional** or ethnic lines
 - Vocabulary, **Syntax**, Pronunciation, Cadence, Pace of speech.
- Linguists think about dialects in terms of **chains**.
 - Distributed across **space**
 - Those **nearest** to each other geographically will be the most similar.
- Can be marked by actual differences in **vocabulary**
 - Linguistic geographers **map** the extent of particular words marking their **limits** as isoglosses.
 - **Isogloss** - a geographic boundary within which a particular linguistic feature occurs.



LANGUAGE DIVERGENCE

- When a **lack** of spatial **interaction** among speakers breaks the language into **dialects** & then **new** languages.
- I.E. When the **Roman** Empire disintegrated, places within the region discontinued **interaction**, prompting a round of linguistic divergence.

LANGUAGE CONVERGENCE

- If people with **different** languages have consistent **spatial** interaction, convergence can take place
 - **Two** languages become **one**.
 - I.E. Frankish traders revitalized the ports of the Eastern Mediterranean. Local traders did not speak the language. Frankish was mixed with Italian, Greek, Spanish, & Arabic
- Create special **problems** for researchers because the rules of **reconstruction** may not apply or may be **unreliable**

LANGUAGE DIFFUSION

- Several **theories** hypothesize how, why, & where languages **diffuse** over time.
 - Each **varies** according to the impetus for diffusion
 - One commonality is a **focus** on **Europe**.
 - Conquest Theory
 - Agriculture Theory
 - Dispersal hypothesis
 - Renfrew hypothesis

CONQUEST THEORY

- **Early** speakers of Proto-Indo-European **spread** from east to west on horseback, **overpowering** earlier inhabitants and beginning the **diffusion** & differentiation of Indo-European tongues.
- Sound shifts in derivative languages represent a long period of **divergence** in languages as one moves **west** through Europe.

INDO-EUROPEAN: PROPOSED WESTWARD DISPERSAL



AGRICULTURE THEORY

- With increased food supply & increased population, speakers from the hearth of Indo-European languages migrated into Europe.

DISPERSAL HYPOTHESIS

- Indo-European languages first moved from the hearth eastward into present-day Iran & then around the Caspian & into Europe.



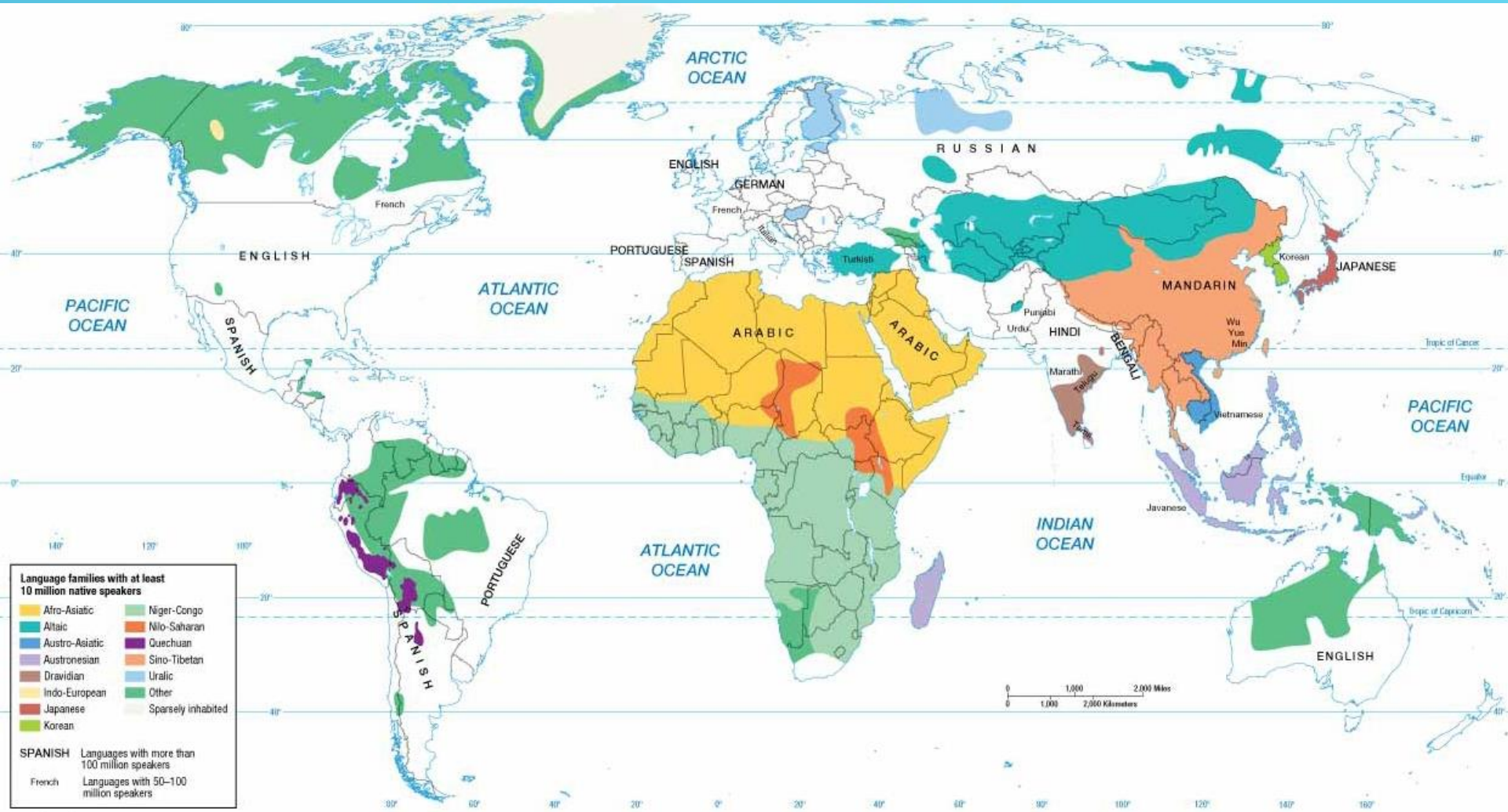


RENFREW HYPOTHESIS

- Proto-Indo-European began in the Fertile Crescent
 - From Anatolia, diffused Europe's languages
 - From the Western Arc, diffused North Africa & Arabia's languages
 - From the Eastern Arc, diffused SW Asia & S Asia's languages

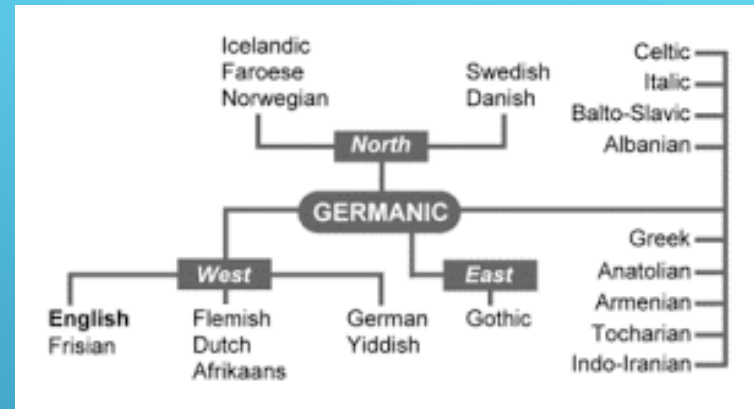
DISTRIBUTION OF LANGUAGE FAMILIES

- Two **largest** language families are...
 - Indo-European
 - Predominate language family in **Europe**, South Asia, North America, & Latin America
 - **Sino-Tibetan**
 - Encompasses languages spoken in the People's Republic of **China** & several smaller countries in SE Asia
 - No **single** Chinese language
 - **Mandarin** is the most-used language in the world & the official language of both the PRC & Taiwan. Most **number** of native speakers.



INDO-EUROPEAN DISTRIBUTION

- **Four** most widely spoken branches
 - **Germanic**
 - Spoken primarily in NW Europe & North **America**
 - Divides into High & Low Germanic subgroups
 - **English** is classified in the Low Germanic group
 - **Indo-Iranian**
 - Spoken primarily in S. **Asia**
 - Most speakers of the language branch
 - **Subdivided** into eastern (Indic) & western (Iranian)



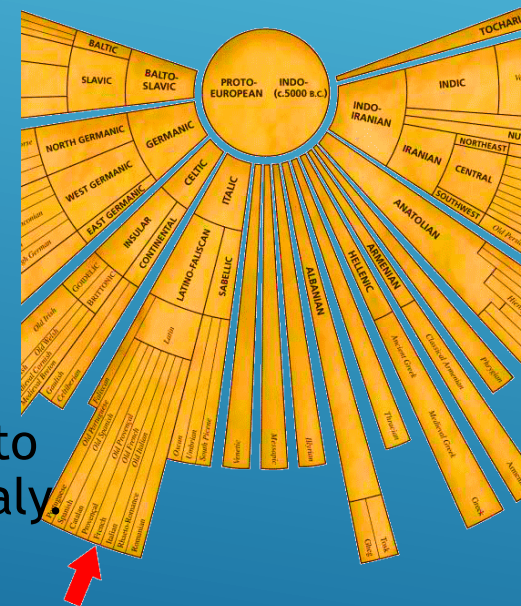
INDO-EUROPEAN DISTRIBUTION

- **Balto-Slavic**

- Spoken primarily in **Eastern** Europe
- Divided into...
 - East Slavic & Baltic Groups - **Russian**, Ukrainian, & Belarusian
 - West & South Slavic Groups - Polish, Czech, **Slovak**, & Serbo-Croatian.

- **Romance**

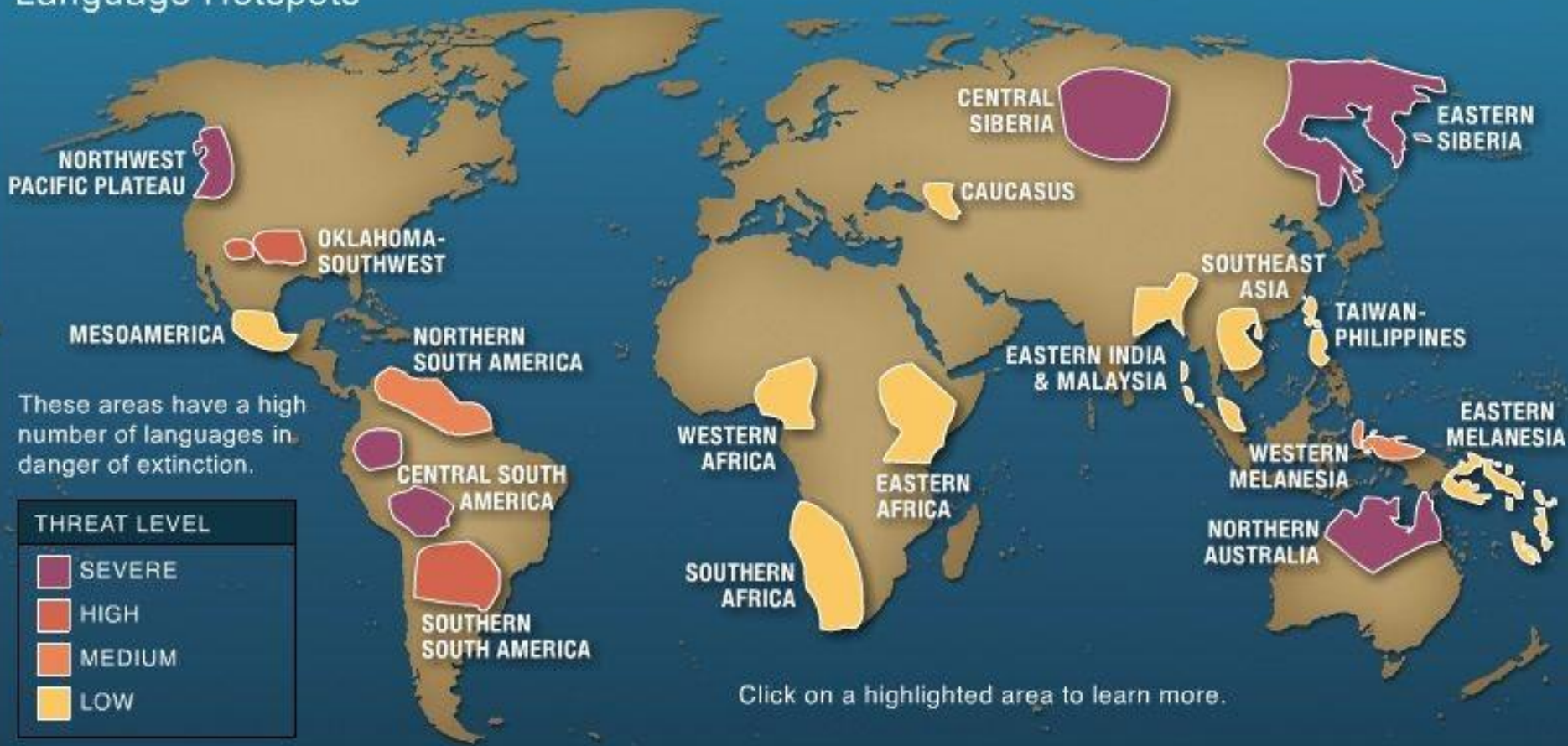
- Spoken primarily in **SW** Europe & Latin America
- Most widely used are **Spanish**, Portuguese, **French**, & Italian
- Regions where spoken language tend to **correspond** to political **boundaries** of Spain, Portugal, France, & Italy



DISAPPEARANCE OF LANGUAGES

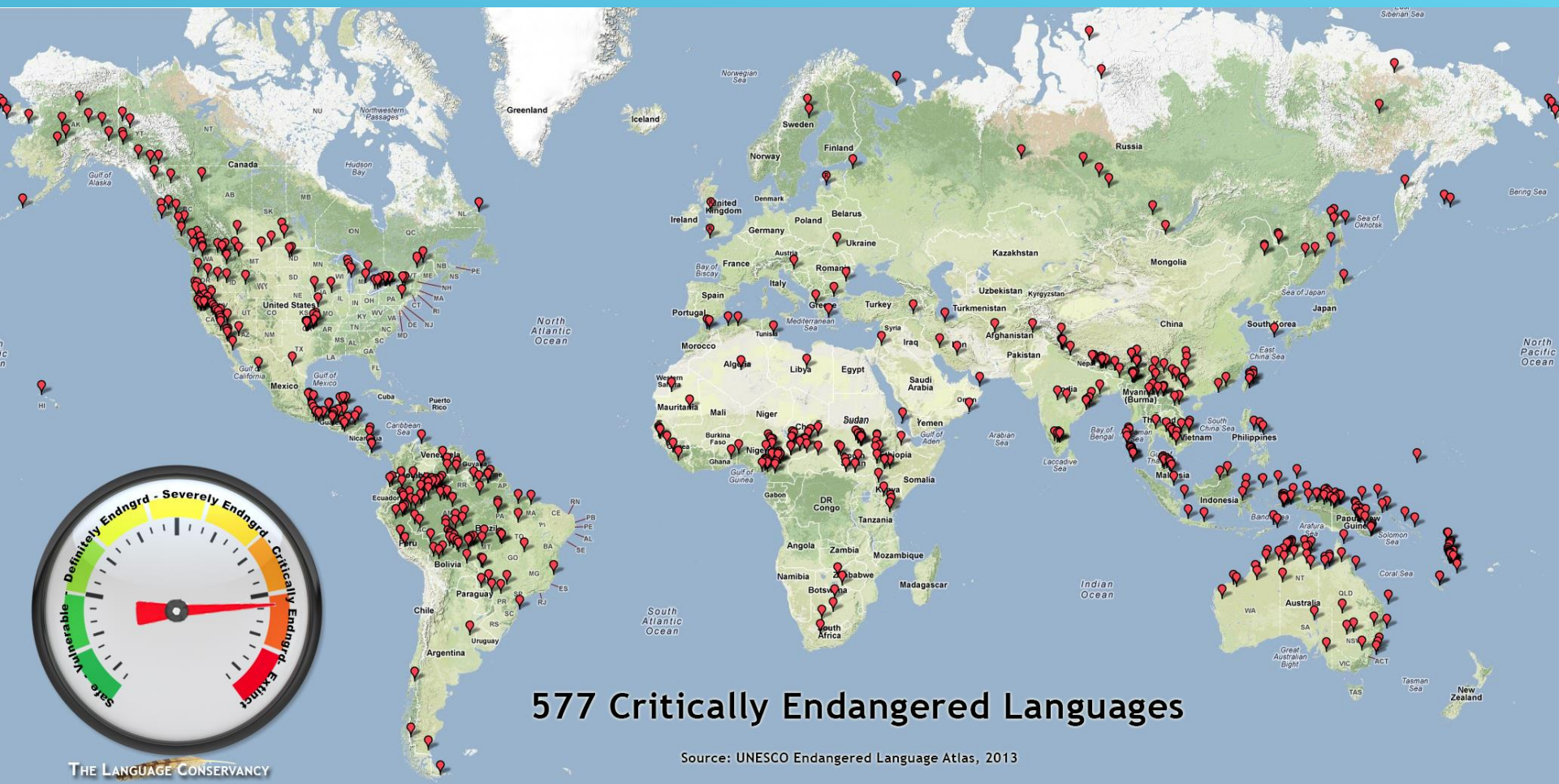
- Language **extinction** creates branches on the language tree with dead ends.
 - Representing a **halt** in interaction between the extinct language & languages that continued
- Linguists predict that at least **half** of the worlds 7,000+ languages will be **dead** or dying by **2050**.

Language Hotspots



ENDANGERED LANGUAGE

- Anthropologist Wade Davis estimates that **half** of the world's languages are **endangered**.
- Most are lost because one group **dominates** another, & the dominant language is **privileged**.
- Two **dimensions** to characterization of endangerment...
 - Number of **users** who identify with a particular language
 - Number & **nature** of the users or functions for which the language is employed



577 Critically Endangered Languages

Source: UNESCO Endangered Language Atlas, 2013

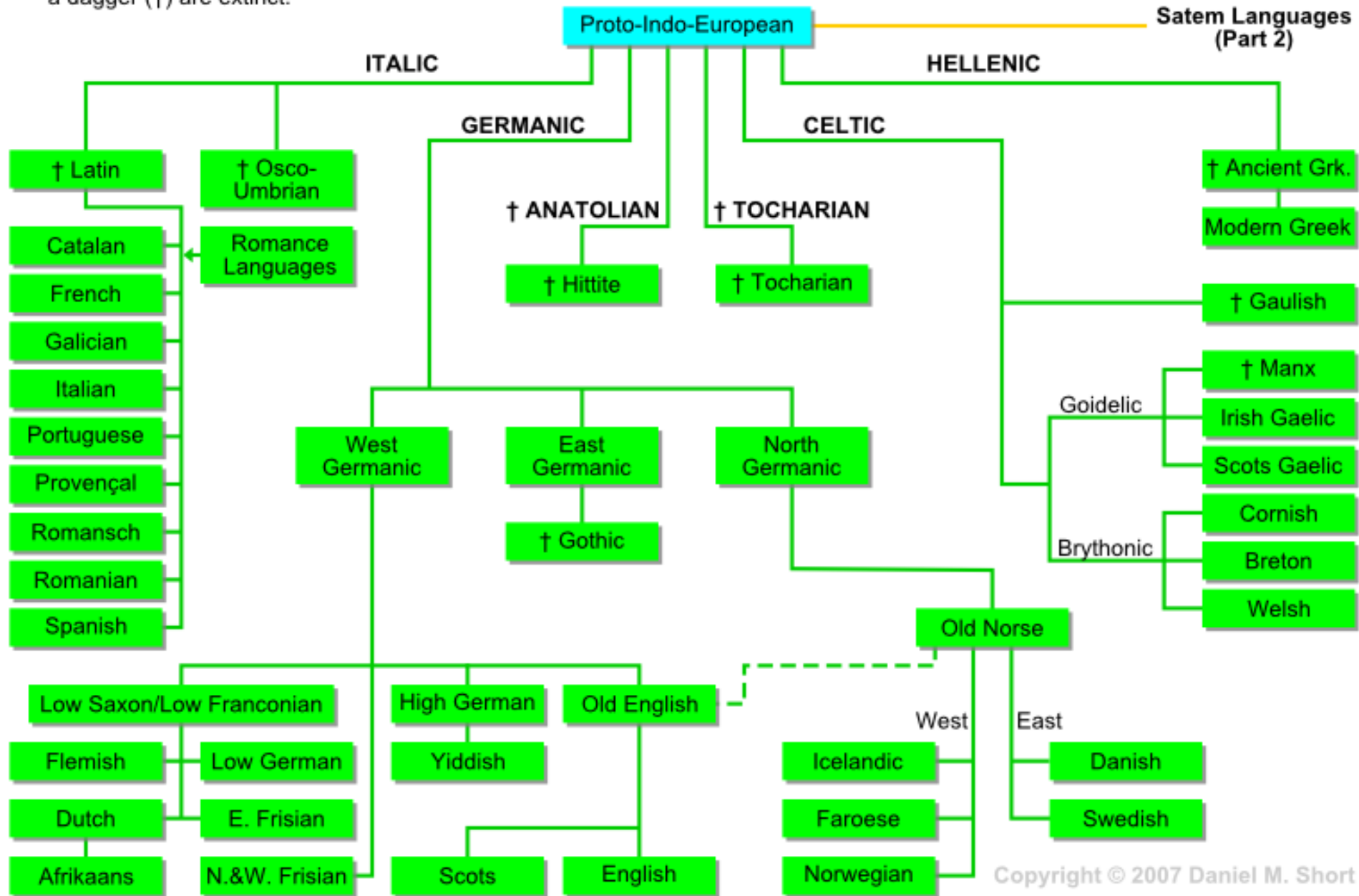
EXTINCT LANGUAGE

- Languages can become **extinct** when all descendants **perish** or when they choose to **use** another language.
- Does not **occur** overnight
 - Takes place across **generations**
- Presently **473** languages
 - 46 in Africa, 182 in **Americas**, 84 in Asia, 9 in **Europe**, & 152 in Pacific
- Possible to **deduce** a large part of an extinct language
 - **Backward** reconstruction - track sound shifts & hardening of consonants “backwards” **towards** the original language.

Indo-European Languages

Part 1: Centum Languages

Languages marked with a dagger (†) are extinct.

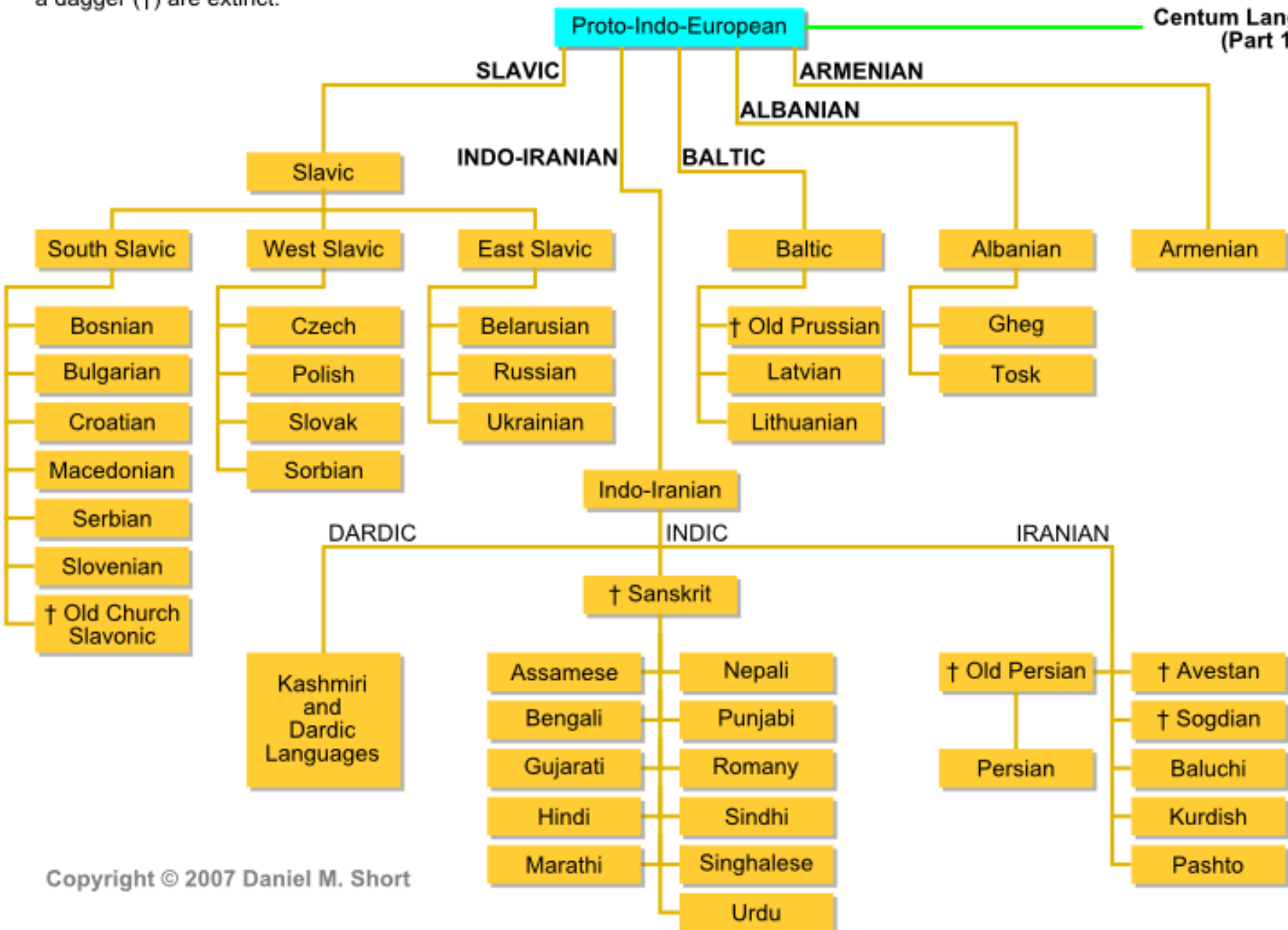


Indo-European Languages

Part 2: Satem Languages

Languages marked with a dagger (†) are extinct.

Centum Languages
(Part 1)



REVIVED & ARTIFICIAL LANGUAGES

- Revived languages
 - Has experienced near or complete extinction as either a spoken or written language, but has been intentionally revived & regained some of its former status.
 - Hebrew
- Artificial languages
 - A planned language that has been consciously devised instead of having developed naturally.
 - Esperanto

SPATIAL INTERACTIONS CREATE:

- **Lingua Franca**
 - A **language** used among speakers of **different** languages for the purpose of **trade** & commerce
 - Can be a **single** language, or a **mix** of two or more.
 - **English** became lingua franca during colonial period.
- **Pidgin** Language
 - A language created when people **combine** parts of two or more languages into a **simplified** structure & vocabulary.
- **Creole** language
 - A **pidgin** language that has developed a more **complex** structure & vocabulary & has become the **native** language of a group of people.

TOPONYM

- Cultural geography Yi-Fu Tuan, studied the **role** & function of language in shaping of **places**.
 - By **naming** a place, people in effect call that place into **being**.
- Geographers call place names **toponyms**
 - Imparts a certain **character** on a place
 - **Reflects** the social **processes** in a place
 - Can give us a glimpse of the **history** of a place

CHANGING TOPONYMS

- When people **change** the toponym of a place, they have the power to **wipe** out the **past**
- Major reasons people change toponyms
 - After **decolonization**
 - After a political revolution
 - To **memorialize** people or events
 - To commodify or brand a place.

- Example:

- Small town in Wales
- Feared loss of the Welsh language & despised the role English had played in diminishing the Welsh language
- Wanted to boost their local economy & attract tourists.
- Renamed their town:
Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerchwyrndrobwlllantysiliogogoch

