

Language

- approx 7000 spoken languages
- By the end of the century half of those will be gone
- Most spoken by small isolated groups
- Globalization is causing these groups to adopt the majority language of their region

I Relationships among languages

essential to a group's culture

• constantly changing

A. Origins of Language

1. Linguists have said spoken sounds as recent as tens of thousands of years ago or as far back as hundreds of thousands of years ago
2. Not sure of diffusion paths

B. Language Families

1. 15 families of languages
2. Language Trees show the relationship between the language families
 - Shows how languages grow from one another
3. Distribution of language reflects migration
 - Ex: Huns + Hungary

C. Indo-European Languages

1. Spoken around 6000 years ago
2. Nearly half the world's population speaks one of the languages of the Indo-European language family.
3. 400-500 languages
4. 2.8 Billion Speakers
 - Ex: German, English, French, Spanish

5. Latin + the fall of the Roman Empire : Language split into the Romance languages due to increased isolation and the decline of trade.

D. Accents + Dialects

1. Accents : how words sound when pronounced

a) often reflect social class or geographic region.

b) Isoglosses : the boundary between variations in pronunciations or word usages.

2. Dialects : variations in accent, grammar, usage, and spelling

a) Variations are large enough for most people to notice, but small enough that speakers can still understand each other.

Ex: Hello everyone, Hi ya'll Hi yous guys

3. Adages: sayings that attempt to express a truth about life

Ex: Early bird gets the worm.

* Dialects could be the first steps to a new language

Ex: American English vs. British English