Components of Language
Types of Language

• Verbal
  • The spoken communication following a formal and informal structure
    • Grammar and Slang

• Written
  • The formalized system of symbols representing sounds used to record language

• Kinesics
  • Nonverbal language system using a series of recognizable gestures, facial expressions, and even eye contact

• Paralanguage
  • Verbalized accompaniments of language including slurs, tones of voice, and non-meaningful utterances (ex. um, ah, shhhh)
Studying Linguistics

• In order to understand a language and its changes sociologists need to be able to learn the language from living speakers, or by comparing it to similar languages.
  • Ancient Egyptian not understood till Rosetta Stone discovered with same thing written in three languages (could cross-reference them)
• Glottochronology – Tracing changes of language over time, based on the assumption that 14% of language changes every 1000 years
Linguistic Majorities

- Worldwide over 3000 different languages spoken
  - 50% speaks the top 12 languages
  - Mandarin has the most
  - English is most widespread

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Native speakers</th>
<th>Total speakers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mandarin</td>
<td>885</td>
<td>1,075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindi</td>
<td>375</td>
<td>496</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>425</td>
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<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>514</td>
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<td>Arabic</td>
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<td>Portuguese</td>
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<td>French</td>
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<td>Malay-Indonesian</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: A native speaker is one for whom the language is his or her first language.*

Source: U.S. Department of State

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Linguistic Development

- **Protolanguage**: Evolution of current languages from a common root
- **Language family**: Languages related by descent from a common protolanguage
  - Members of the same language family may not be mutually intelligible
    - Ex. English speakers can not easily understand German even though they are in the same language family
- **Cognates**: Words with common etymological origins
  - i.e. Tsar (Russians), Kaiser (German) from Caesar (Latin)
- **Etymology**: Study of word origins and changes
Evolution of Proto-Indo-European Language
Indo-European Linguistic Diffusion
Language and Cultural Identity

• Language is a unifying factor leading to greater cultural cohesion
• Linguistic similarities lead to formation of identity
  • Ex. French people speak French, and Texans have a “Texan” accent
  • Some countries go so far as to establish official languages
    • Ex. Canada’s official languages are English and French
  • Acceptance into a cultural group sometimes dependent on language acquisition
    • Ex. French do not accept French Canadians as similar due to language differences