Chapter 5: Language

Unit 3
Where Are the World’s Languages Distributed?

• Language—system of communication through speech, a collection of sounds that a group of people understands to have the same meaning.

• Language is often impacted by migration
  • Why?
Where Are the World’s Languages Distributed?

• Classifying Languages
  • Institutional language

• Official language

• Literary tradition

• Developing language

• Vigorous language
Where Are the World’s Languages Distributed?

• Organizing Language Families
  • Language family—collection of languages related through a common ancestral language that existed long before recorded history
  • Language branch—collection of languages within a family related through a common ancestral language that existed several thousand years ago
  • Language group—collection of languages within a branch that share a common origin in the relatively recent past and display many similarities in grammar and vocabulary.
  • Language
  • Dialect—A regional variety of a language distinguished by vocabulary, spelling, and pronunciation.
Where Are the World’s Languages Distributed?

• Language Families/Classification of languages: P. 150-151
  • Indo-European = the largest language family
    • 46 percent of the world’s population speaks an Indo-European language
  • Sino-Tibetan = the second-largest language family
    • 21 percent of the world’s population speaks a Sino-Tibetan language
      • Mandarin = the most used language in the world
Where Are the World’s Languages Distributed?

- Other Large Language Families
  - Southeast Asia Language Families
    - Austronesian
    - Austro-Asiatic
  - East Asia Language Families
    - Japanese
    - Korean
  - Other Asian Language Families
    - Altaic
      - Turkish = most widely spoken
    - Uralic
      - Estonian, Hungarian, and Finnish
Where Are the World’s Languages Distributed?

• Other Large Language Families
  • African Language Families
    • Extensive linguistic diversity
      • 1,000 distinct languages + thousands of dialects
    • Afro-Asiatic
      • Arabic = most widely spoken
    • Niger-Congo
      • 95 percent of sub-Saharan Africans speak a Niger-Congo language
  • Nilo-Saharan
  • Khoisan
Where Did English and Related Languages Originate and Diffuse?

• Distribution of Indo-European Branches
  • Germanic
  • Romance
  • Indo-Iranian
  • Balto-Slavic
Where Did English and Related Languages Originate and Diffuse?
Where Did English and Related Languages Originate and Diffuse?

• Origin and diffusion of Indo-European
  • A “Proto-Indo-European” language?
    • Internal evidence
    • Nomadic warrior theory
      • Kurgan Theory
      • Sedentary farmer theory
Where Did English and Related Languages Originate and Diffuse?

• Origin and diffusion of English
  • English is spoken by 328 million as a first language
  • English colonies
  • Origins of English
    • German invasions
    • Norman invasions
Where Did English and Related Languages Originate and Diffuse?

• Diffusion of English
  • Migration and colonization due to the British
    • USA: imperialism

• Combining English with other languages
  • Franglais
  • Spanglish
  • Denglish
Where Did English and Related Languages Originate and Diffuse?

• Global importance of English
  • Lingua Franca
  • Global economy and culture
    • Internet/Media
  • Pidgin Language
  • Logograms
  • Chinese as the next Lingua Franca? Why?
Where Did English and Related Languages Originate and Diffuse?

• Official languages
  • Can be one or more language
  • Use by the government to enact legislation and other conduct public business
    • Could also be the only language used in public schools
  • 2 billion people live in countries where English is the official language
Why Do Individual Languages Vary Among Places?

• Dialects of English
  • Dialect = a regional variation of a language
  • Isogloss = a word-usage boundary
  • Standard language = a well-established dialect
• Dialects
  • In England
    • Differences between British and American English
• Standard language—dialect that is well established and widely recognized as the most acceptable for government, business, education, and mass communication
Why Do Individual Languages Vary Among Places?

- U.S. Dialects
  - North vs. South vs. Midland (Colonial)
  - African American English
    - Ebonics (African American Vernacular English)
  - Appalachian English
  - Creole Languages
    - Creole:
Why Do Local Languages Survive?

• Endangered Languages
• Preserving Languages
  • Hebrew
  • Celtic
  • Welsh
  • Cornish
  • Breton
• Isolated Languages—language that is unrelated to any other and therefore not attached to any language family
  • Basque
  • Icelandic
• Extinct Languages—language that was once used by people in daily activities but is no longer in use.
• New languages and growing languages