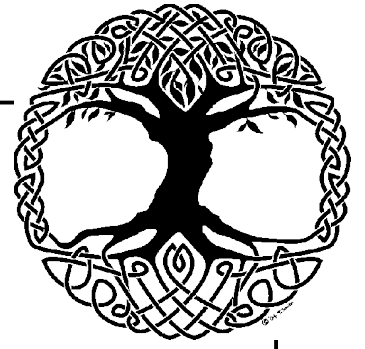


Language Classification and Language Families



Typological Classification: Typological language classification considers universal similarities with no regard to the lineage or common origin of the language. There are 3 main types (and subtypes in some cases).

Three Typological Classifications: Isolating / Inflecting / Agglutinating.

Morpheme: ‘Minimal unit of meaning or grammatical function.’

Isolating languages like Vietnamese (& others in S-E Asia) have 1 morpheme per word.

E.g.: Khi tôi đến nhà bạn tôi, chúng tôi bắt đầu làm bài.

When I come house friend I pl. I begin do our lessons.

“When I arrived at my friend’s house, we began to do our lessons.

Agglutinating languages cluster morphemes together. Turkish, Hungarian, Finnish, Tamil, etc. But many language may display features of Agglutination. Cf. English *un-whole-some-ness*.

A known example in English is *antidisestablishmentarianism* but shorter words abound.

Edward Sapir. *Language: An Introduction to the Study of Speech* (1921). Sapir introduced the terms Analytic / Synthetic / Polysynthetic. English has developed from a very synthetic Language (i.e. highly inflected) to one that is analytic (that is, more dependent on word order).

Genetic/Genealogical Classification: Family Tree Model (1871) & **Wave model** (1872).

William Jones (1746-1794): English philologist and scholar of ancient India, famous for his proposition of the existence of a relationship among Indo-European languages. Of all his discoveries, Jones is known today for making and propagating the observation that Sanskrit bore a certain resemblance to classical Greek and Latin. In *The Sanscrit Language* (1786) he suggested that all three languages had a common root, and that indeed they may all be further related, in turn, to Gothic and the Celtic languages, as well as to Persian.

Indo-European language family: just one family among many, worldwide.

centum and satem languages: The terms *centem* and *satem* come from the words for the number ‘100,’ representing two divergent branches of Indo-European. Generally, centem languages refer to those of the west (e.g. Romance languages); satem languages include those of the east–Indo-Iranian, Armenian, Baltic, Slavic, Albanian etc.

Proto-Germanic: Common, theoretical language of the Germanic family (1st Millennium BCE).

Germanic Deviations from Proto-Indo-European: Generally, the simplification of grammar. E.g. tense reduction to simple Past and Present; 2) innovation of ‘Weak Verbs,’ i.e. those with a dental suffix at the end (e.g. ‘will-ed’). Numerous other deviations have been documented.

Phonological deviations: The two laws below define a deviation in phonology from PIE.

1. Grimm’s Law (1828): The observation that certain Indo-European consonants (mainly stops, [b], [d], [g], [k] [p], [t]) undergo regular changes in the Germanic languages that are not seen in non-Germanic languages such as Greek or Latin. Examples include *p* becoming *f* so that Latin *pedem* corresponds to English *foot* and German *Fuss*. The principle was set out by Jacob Grimm in his German grammar (2nd edition, 1822).

2. Verner’s Law (1875): The observation that voiceless fricatives (e.g. [f], [p], [s]) in Germanic predicted by Grimm’s Law became voiced (to [b], [d], [z]) if the preceding syllable in the corresponding Indo-European word was unstressed, as in the English words *death* and *dead*.



बाल पठति . बाला लिखति . <small>Boy reads . Girl writes .</small>
स चलति . सा खेलति . <small>He walks . She plays .</small>
राम शाम च वदतः . तौ वदतः . <small>Ram and Sham speak . They speak .</small>

Skt. pitar	Grk. pater	Lat. pater	OE faeder
Skt. trayas	Grk. treis	Lat. tres	OE threo
Skt. pad-	Grk. pous	Lat. pes	OE fot
Skt. tanu-	Grk. tanaos	Lat. tenuis	MnE thin
Skt. loka	Grk. leukos	Lat. lux	OE leoht