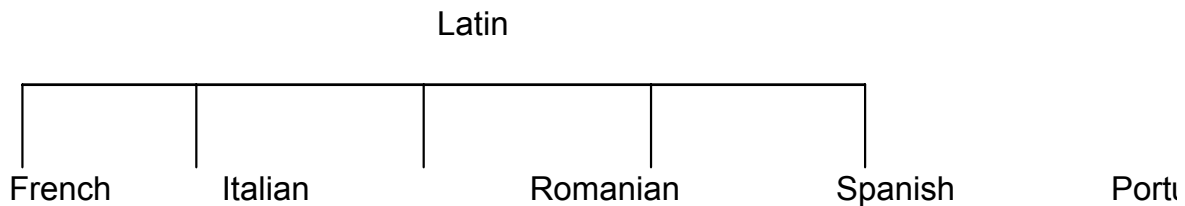


PAPER 7 (HISTORICAL LINGUISTICS)
GENETIC CLASSIFICATION OF LANGUAGE

Write a note on the Indo-European family of language and place English within it.

The comparison of various languages led to the assumption that some languages are related, that they have developed from a common source. This assumption was confirmed in large part through the linguistic situation in Western Europe. The common words in French, Spanish, Italian, etc. show consistent similarities and differences. This leads us to the conclusion that French, Italian, Spanish, etc. are members of one linguistic group or one language family. The reason for their similarity is common descent from one earlier language, Latin, and is, known as the "Romance language."



Through such comparison we can relate other languages, assume that they developed from an earlier language, and classify them as belonging to a specific language family.

Starting before 1800, Sir William Jones, a jurist in India, observed that Sanskrit was systematically similar to Greek and Latin. This observation led to a systematic comparison of older forms of English and German with Latin, Greek-Sanskrit, etc. and other languages. This in turn led to the classification of these languages into the Indo-European family and to the development of historical linguistics as a discipline. We speak of the Indo-European group and other such groups as a language family. Greek and Latin and other Indo-European languages may be called sister languages.

The Indo-European family is important for understanding of historical linguistic method as well as for the knowledge of the interrelationship of some of the world's most widely spoken languages.

Many of the languages of Europe and Asia are interrelated. There are similarities of the basic vocabulary and of the various systems of grammar. For example -

S.N.	SANSKRIT	LATIN	PERSIAN	ENGLISH
1	pitri 17	pater	pe ar	fa ar
2	matri 17	met r	me r	ma er

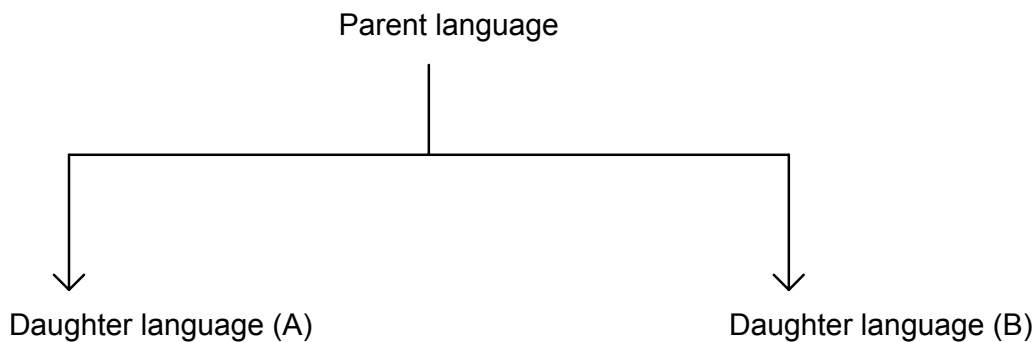
When the Romans conquered a large part of Europe, North America and near East, their language (Latin) became spoken over wide areas as the standard language of administration and government, especially in the Western part of Europe. Then in the 4th century AD, the Roman empire began to disintegrate and in the centuries, which followed, was over run by barbarian invasions - Huns, Slavs, Germans and gradually

broke up because there was no longer a single unifying center to hold the language (Latin) together; a divergent development took place and Latin evolved into a number of different languages. In general, further, the place was from Rome, then moved the new languages diverged from the original Latin. Today there are few national languages descended from Latin:

(a) Italian (b) French (c) Spanish (d) Romanian (e) Portuguese

There are many more smaller ones which belong to some large group with a common culture.

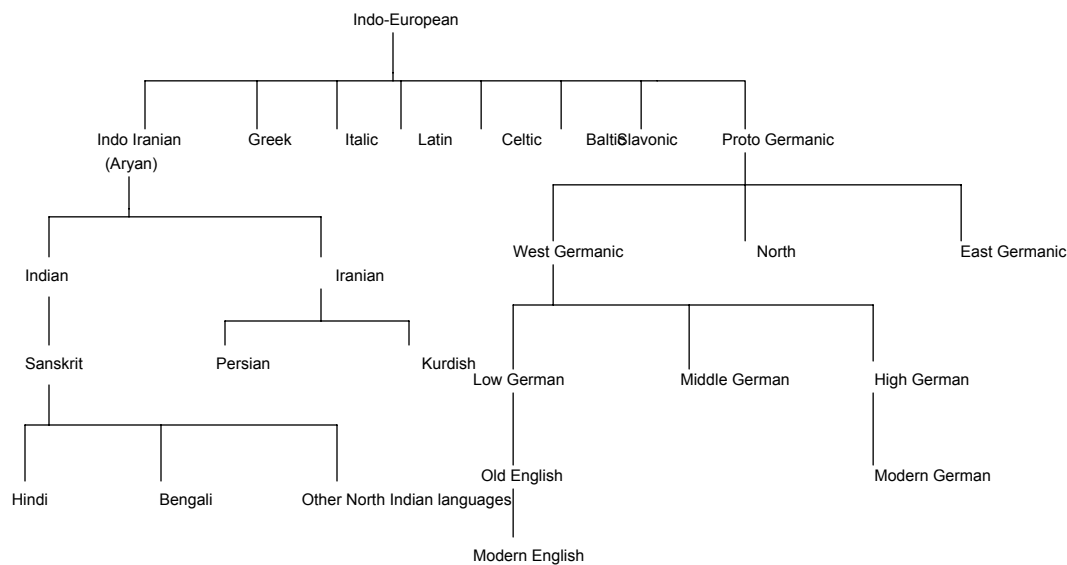
The process of change in a language spoken in two villages at a given time will slowly change, but the changes will not be identical in both villages, for the conditions are slightly different. Hence the speech used by one of the villages may gradually diverge from the speech used in the other. When a language has diverged into two forms like this, we say that it has two dialects within the single village, speech will remain fairly uniform, because the speakers are in constant contact and so influence one another. Suppose the inhabitants of one of the villages belong and migrate to some distant in mass, the conditions here are quite different from their old home. They also completely lose contact with the other village. The rate at which the new dialects diverge will now increase partly because of the difference of environment and partly because they no longer influence one another. After a few hundred years the new dialects may have got so different that they are no longer mutually intelligible. We should now say that they are two different languages. When two languages have evolved in this way from some single earlier language, we say that they are related. This can be illustrated diagrammatically by a family tree in the following way:



This process of divergent development leading to the formation of new languages has occurred many times in human history, which is why there are now over two thousand different languages in the world.

An examination of these languages shows that many of them belong to some group of related languages, some of these groups are very large, constituting what we call language families.

The family tree of Indo-European language is as follows:



THE PLACING OF ENGLISH

The branch of Indo-European that English belongs to is called Germanic Proto-Germanic. English is a Germanic language. The Germanic family was located farthest to the north in Iceland. English is attested first in names from the seventh century AD. Since approximately 1600 AD English has expanded continuously. It is now the language used most widely as a second language and as an auxiliary language for international communication, as first language, however, Mandarin (Chinese) probably has more speakers of all European languages, English is undoubtedly the simplest in structure. The only really serious rival of English for the position of a world language was, till recently, French owing to the world-wide connections of England and owing to the varied foreign nations that have come to England during her long history, the vocabulary of English has been enriched by foreign elements to a far greater extent than that of any other European language.

IMPORTANCE OF THE DIAGRAM

The family relations of the Indo-European languages can be explained with the help of a family tree diagram. However, although the family tree has some value, it is not entirely satisfactory, because there are always some points on which a language is remote from it. On the tree Greek and Sanskrit are in different major branches, but nevertheless resemble one another a good deal in syntax and to some extent in vocabulary. In fact it is impossible to depict the relationships of the Indo-European languages in an entirely satisfactory way by means of a model in which branches divide and sub-divide.

[S.N.] - The Indo-European languages are divided into two main groups known as

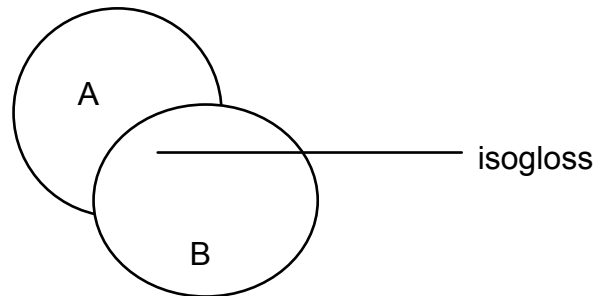
1. Centum, and
2. Satam.

So far this division lies in the most clearly marked and there is no overlapping nor any neutral region where characters of both groups might be found, as in almost invariably the case with other linguistic divisions.

CENTUM: This is the group in which occurs Indo-European languages in which the Proto Indo-European guttural [k] sound is represented by /k/, e.g. Greek, Italic, Celtic, Germanic, etc.

SATAM: This is the group of those Indo-European languages in which the Proto-Indo-European guttural [k] sound has changed into the sibilant [s].

ISOGLOSSSES: On linguistic maps a line separating the areas (called Isogloss) in which the language differs with respect to a given feature or features. An Isogloss is a line marking the boundaries within which a given linguistic feature or phenomenon can be observed.



THE CHIEF CHARACTERISTICS OF THE INDO-EUROPEAN FAMILY

1. Suffix inflection: By inflection is meant the addition of certain endings to the base of a word express certain grammatical relationships and functions and aspects. While this process is common to and characteristic to a major or minor extent of the synthetic languages (also called inflectional languages), it is of little or no importance and often non-extinct in the analytical languages.
2. The Indo-European was originally synthetic in structure, but it is getting more and more analytical in its course of development.
3. The words have been built from monosyllabic roots, with the addition of primary and secondary suffixes.
4. The syntactical prefixes were unknown.
5. The Indo-European family has the power of making true compounds.
6. vowel gradation.
7. Flexions are in great variety.

This family is the only one of inflecting type in which the flexion is external and the root is dynamically invariable (except within the limits of ablaut, also known as apophony) even this happens only in a certain number of cases and not as an invariable rule.