



Endangered Languages

Leanne Hinton

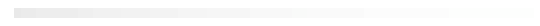
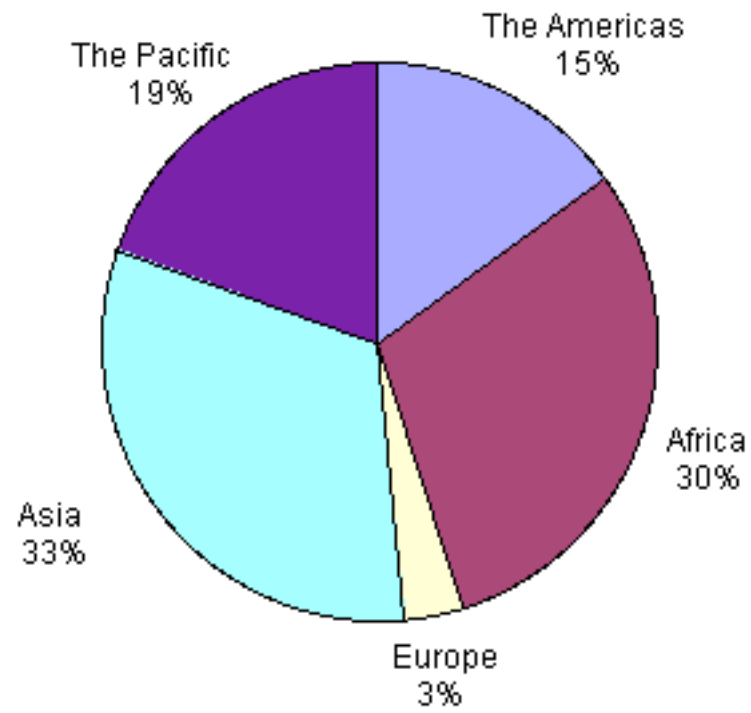
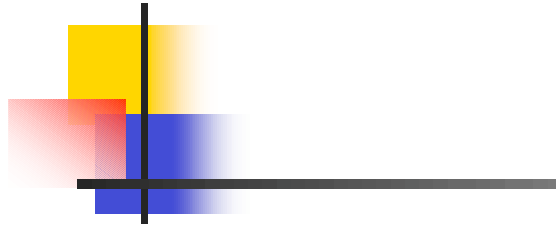
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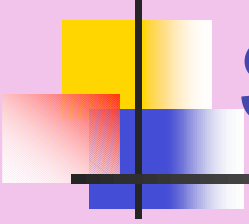


Languages of the world

- The Americas 1,013 15%
- Africa 2,058 30%
- Europe 230 3%
- Asia 2,197 32%
- The Pacific 1,311 19%

- TOTAL 6,809





Some language statistics

- Number of known languages in the world: 6,809



Some language statistics

- Number of known languages in the world: 6,809
- 330 languages each have one million speakers or more.



Some language statistics

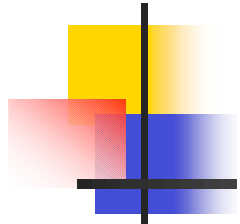
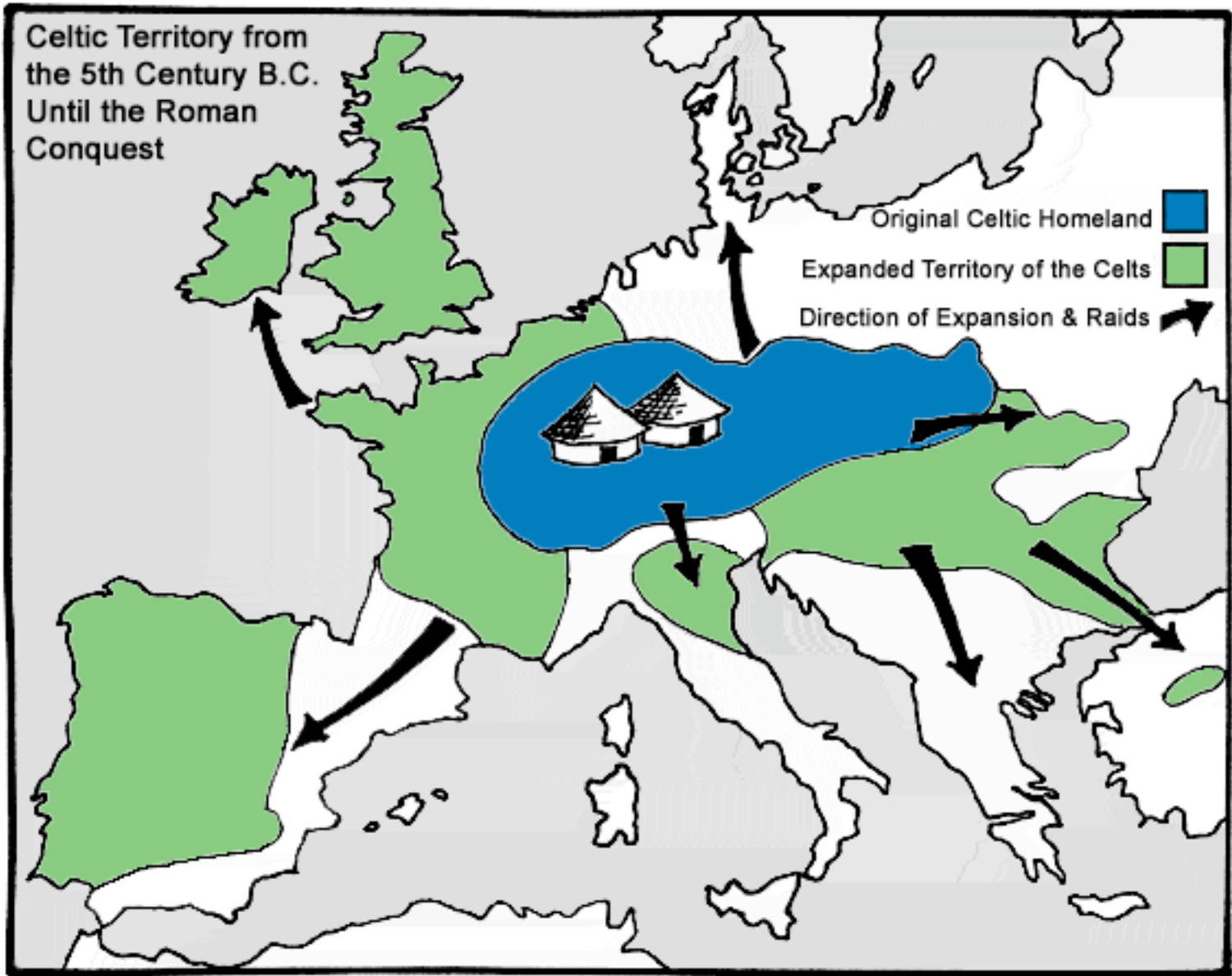
- Number of known languages in the world: 6,809
- 330 languages each have one million speakers or more.
- the median size language in the world is 6,000 speakers

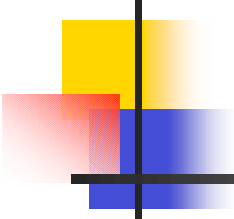


Some language statistics

- Number of known languages in the world: 6,809
- 330 languages each have one million speakers or more.
- the median size language in the world is 6,000 speakers
- 450 languages are in the last stages of becoming extinct

Celtic Territory from
the 5th Century B.C.
Until the Roman
Conquest





Some ecological features of national languages

- 1. spoken by a large population
- 2. language of government
- 3. language of the schools
- 4. language of the media
- 5. language of employment, commerce, etc.



FAQ

- There are only about 200 independent nations in the world.





Nearly extinct languages

- * Africa (37 total)
- * The Americas (161 total)
- * Asia (55 total)
- * Europe (7 total)
- * The Pacific (157 total)



Nearly extinct languages

- * Africa (37 total)
- * **The Americas (161 total)**
- * Asia (55 total)
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some ecological features of endangered languages



- 1. spoken by a small population
- 2. NOT language of government
- 3. NOT language of the schools
- 4. NOT language of the media
- 5. NOT language of employment, commerce, etc.



In the U.S.A.

- 175 living indigenous languages
- 20 being learned by children at home



In California...

- originally at least 80 different languages
- now 50 with any speakers
- none are spoken natively by people under about 60 years old
- only about 5 have more than 10 speakers



External factors leading to language shift

- Schools
- Language policy
- Attitudes of general population
- media
- employment
- prevalence of English in all walks of life



Internal factors leading to language loss

- internalized shame of language
- perception of lack of benefit of knowing the language
- perceptions and misperceptions about language acquisition



Definitions

- First generation: came here from another country
- Second generation: born here
- Third generation: born to second generation



Family dynamics in language loss

- 1. Parents decided to speak English so child would learn it early and not suffer.
- 2. Child rejects the language
- 3. Siblings start speaking to each other in English
- 4. lack of perceived need of the heritage language



Some historical factors in Native American language loss

- 1. boarding school policy
- 2. World War II
- 3. present day schools, economic system, TV, the likes.



Changes in endangered languages

- 1. major language change
 - a. Havasupai
 - '-yaam-g '-yu
 - I-go-same subject I-do
 - yaam-'-yu
 - go - I-do



Changes in Endangered languages

- 2. Massive Borrowing
 - '-mahnyo-k-'yu
 - Socks me-wear-a!



Changes in Endangered languages

- 1. incomplete learning
- 2. attrition
- 3. passive competence



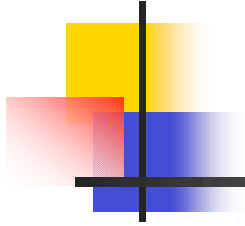
Why does it matter?

Isn't it better if we all speak
one language?



Why does it matter?

- 1. The languages are exciting in their own right
- 2. language loss goes along with loss of knowledge, verbal arts, cultural and ecological practices
- 3. human rights: the right to autonomy



- Biodiversity is healthful.
- How about cultural diversity?