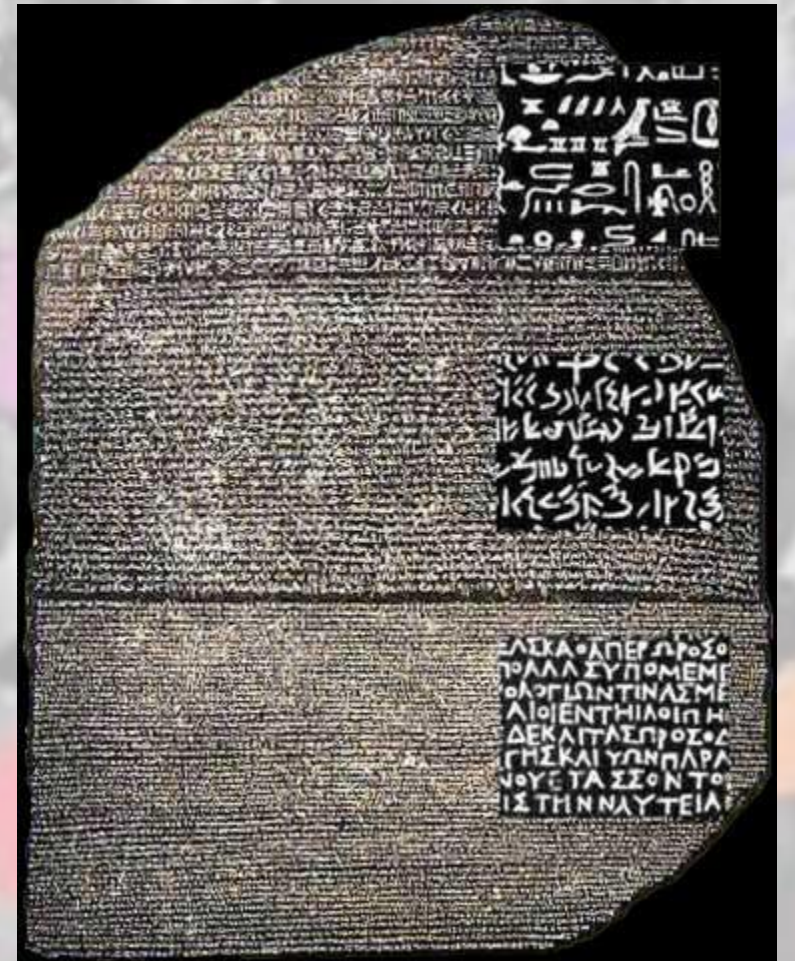


A large crowd of people is shown from an overhead perspective, with a semi-transparent dark grey overlay. The people are wearing various colored clothing, including red, blue, yellow, green, and purple. The text "Components of Language" is centered in the middle of the image in a black, sans-serif font.

Components of Language

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 7-1 The World's Leading Languages and the Number of Speakers of Each (in millions)

Language	Native speakers	Total speakers
Mandarin	885	1,075
Hindi	375	496
Spanish	358	425
English	350	514
Arabic	211	256
Bengali	210	215
Portuguese	178	194
Russian	165	275
Japanese	125	126
German	100	128
French	77	129
Malay-Indonesian	58	176

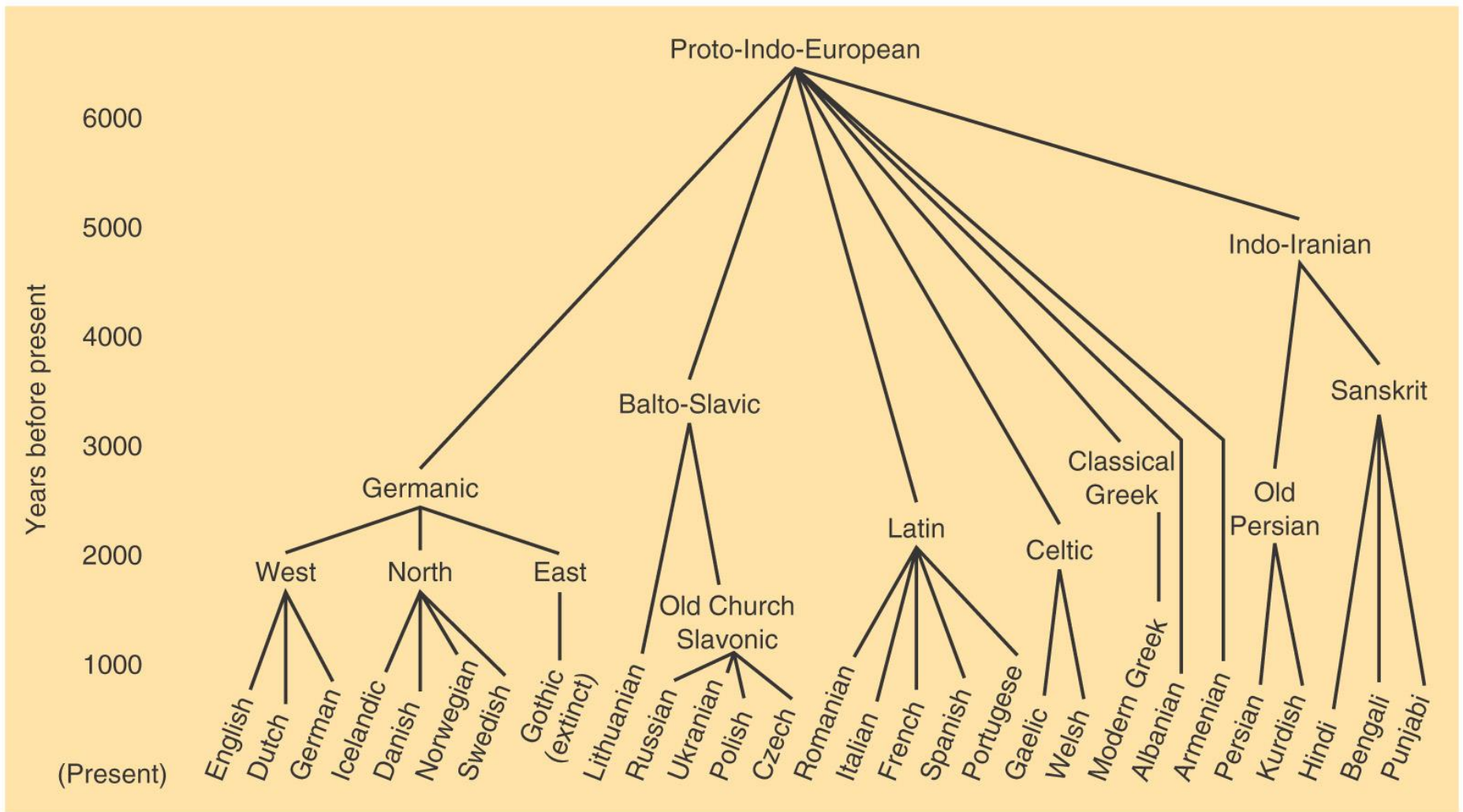
Note: A native speaker is one for whom the language is his or her first language.

Source: U.S. Department of State

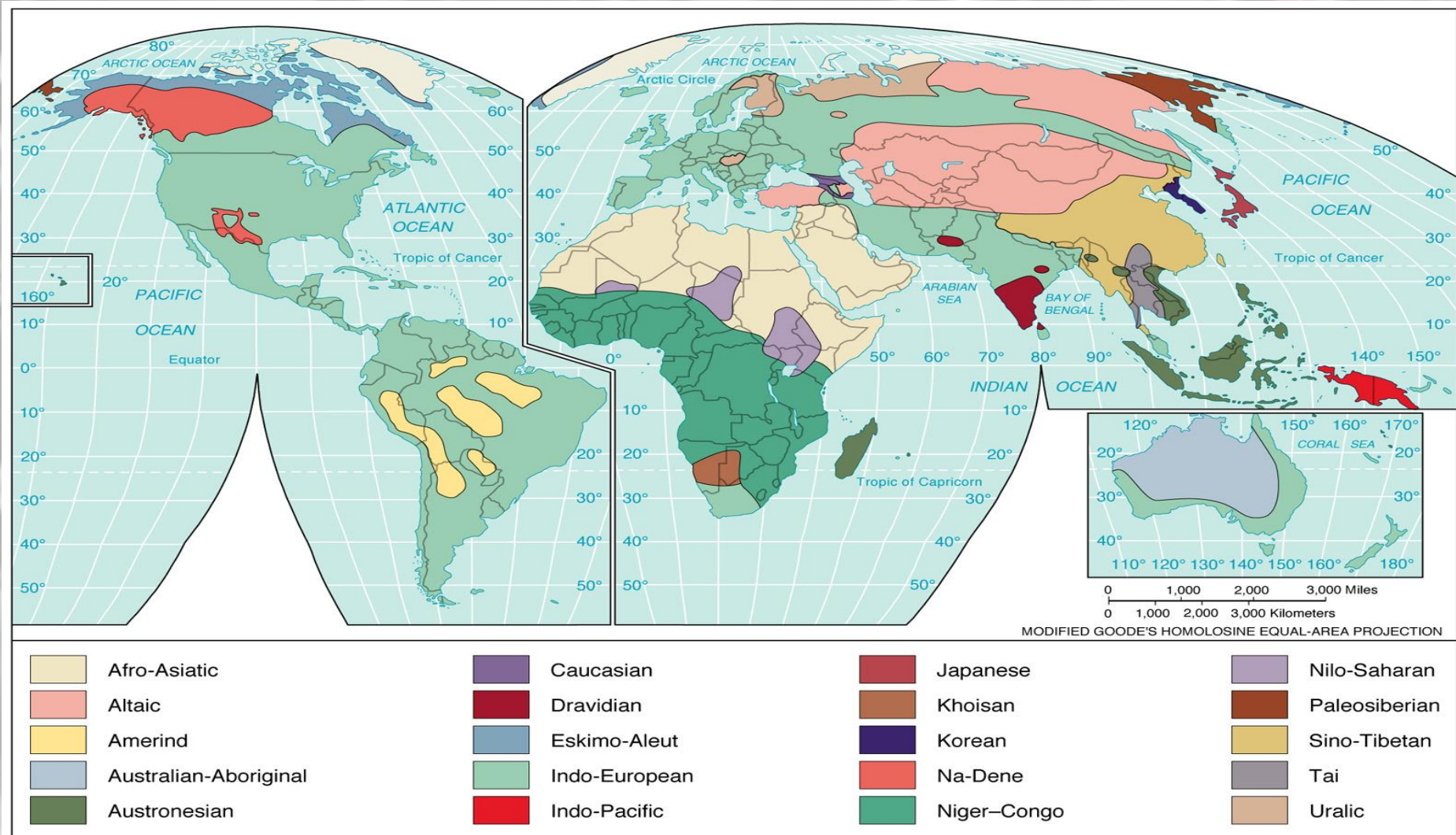
Linguistic Development

- **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



Language Families



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

