

Of the more than **6,000 languages**, about a **dozen are spoken by more than 100 million people each**. These are the world's main languages used in the most populous countries. However, the vast majority of the world's languages are spoken by a relatively small number of people. In fact, **many languages have no written form and are spoken by declining numbers of people**. Language experts estimate that up to **half the world's living languages could be lost by the end of the 21st century as a result of globalization**. New languages form when populations live in isolation, and in the current era, as the world's populations are increasingly interacting with each other, languages are being abandoned and their speakers are switching to more useful tongues.

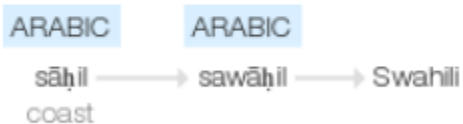
- An **accent is the pronunciation of words** within a language that is different from that used by a different group of the same language. For example, people in Mississippi pronounce words differently from people in North Dakota, but the differences are less severe than dialects.
- Similar to pidgin, a Creole language arises from contact between two other languages and has features of both. However, **Creole is a pidgin that becomes a primary language spoken by people at home**. Creole languages are often developed in colonial settings as a dialect of the colonial language (usually French or English). For example, in the former French colony of Haiti, a French-based Creole language was developed that is spoken by people at home, while French is typically used for professional purposes.
- A dead language is one that is no longer used for local communication. For example, Latin is no longer used by local people to communicate but is still used by the Roman Catholic Church in some of its services.
- A **dialect** is a **regional variety** of a language that uses **different grammar or pronunciation. Examples include American English versus British English**. Linguists suggest that there are three main dialects of the English language in the United States: a Southern dialect, a Midland dialect, and a Northern dialect. Television and public media communication have brought a focus on more uniform speech patterns that have diminished the differences between these three dialects.
- An isolated language is one not connected to any other language on Earth. For example, Basque is not connected to any other language and is only spoken in the region of the Pyrenees between Spain and France.

- A **lingua franca** is a **second language used for commercial purposes** with others outside a language group but not used in personal lives. For example, **Swahili** is used by millions in Africa for doing business with people outside their own group but is not used to communicate within local communities.
- The official language is the language that is on record by a country to be used for all its official government purposes. For example, in India, the official language is Hindi, though in many places the lingua franca is English and several local languages may be spoken.
- A **pidgin is a simplified, created language used to communicate between two or more groups that do not have a language in common**. For example, Residents of New Guinea mix English words with their own language to create a new language that can bridge speakers of different local language groups. Though the words are in English, the grammar and sentence structure is mixed up according to local vocabulary. There are many English-based pidgin languages around the world.

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Swa·hi·li

Origin



from Arabic *sawāḥil*, plural of *sāḥil* 'coast'.

A pidgin is a simplified language created to allow communication between groups of people without a language shared in common

Slang is the local use of informal words or phrases that are not part of the official language. For example, a lot of musicians use slang in their lyrics.