

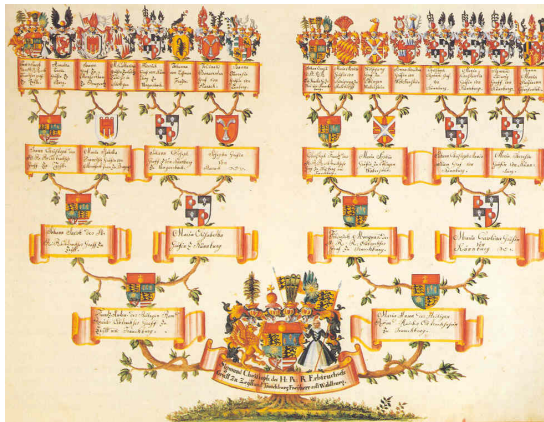
Family trees of languages

Jinyuan Wu

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Introduction

We know how a family evolves.



But what about languages?

Languages evolve in their own ways

“**Neogrammarian hypothesis**”: word changes can only arise from

- Regular sound laws: $p > f$ (in *all* words as long as the sound is in the correct environment!)
- Borrowing: Arabic *ṣuffa* > French *sofa* > English *sofa* > Mandarin Chinese *shāfā*
- Analogy (self-regularization): do you know once people said *baken* instead of *baked*?

Neogrammarian hypothesis

The comparative method

Some family trees