

French

# Introduction

Indo European, Romance, Italic

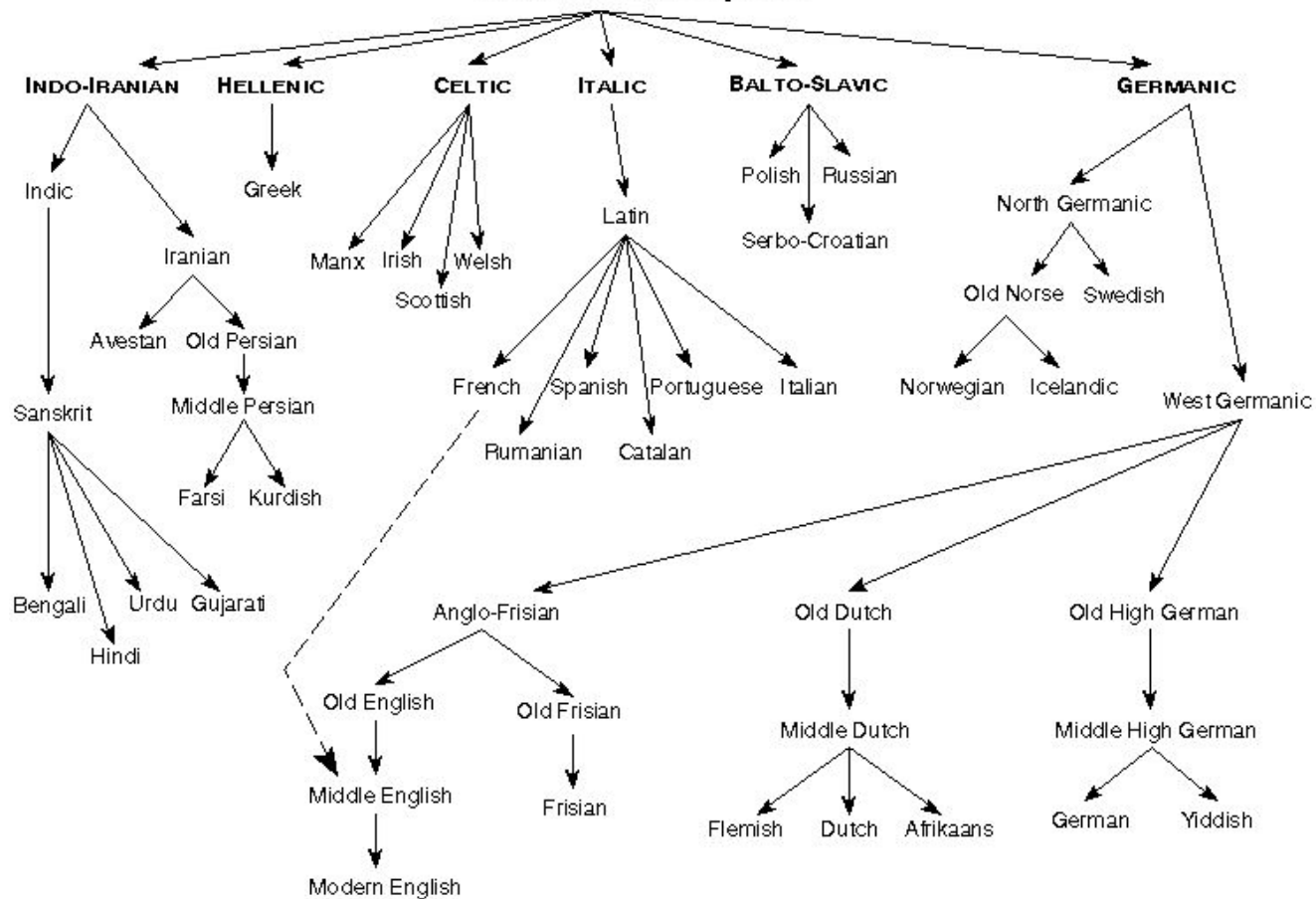
northernmost and the earliest attested Romance language

experienced deep phonological changes, diverging more from Latin than its sister languages

end of the 17th century until after World War I, language of international diplomacy and culture replacing Latin

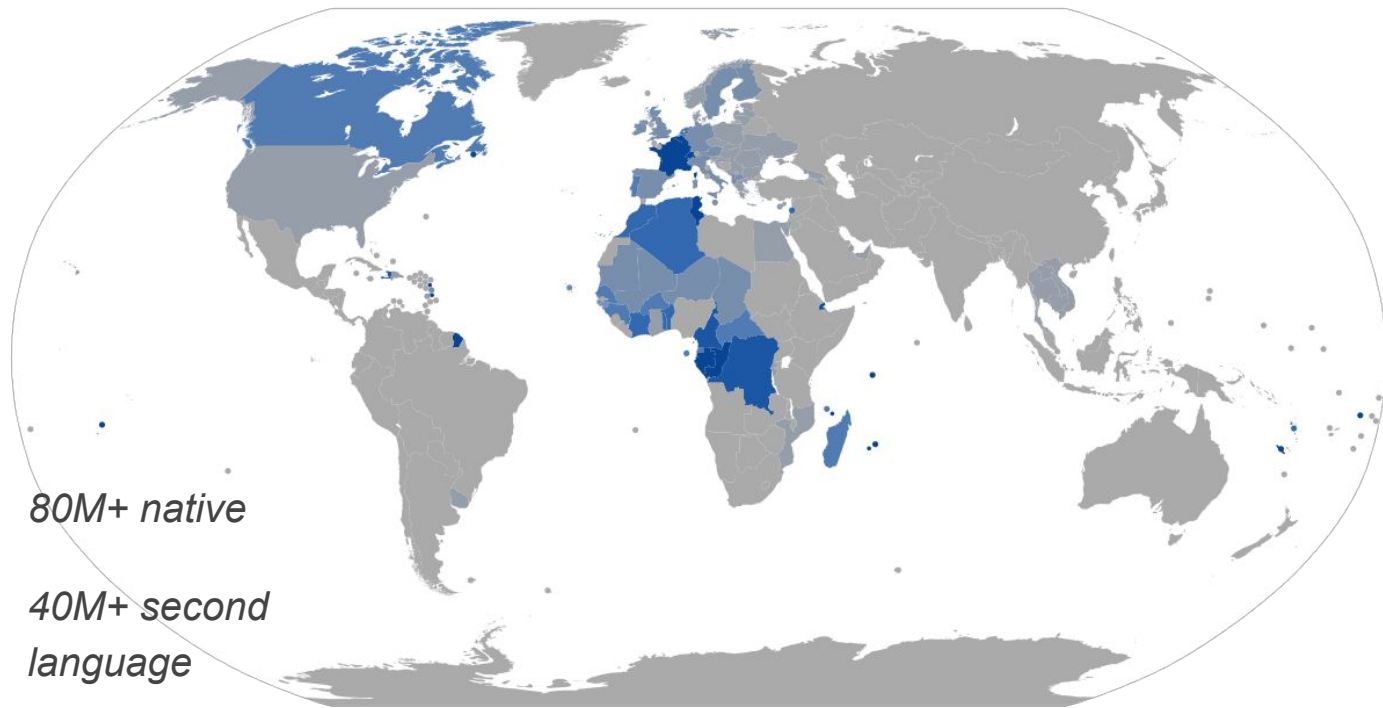
Spoken in every continent as a first or second language

# Proto-Indo-European



# Distribution

Country	Count (M)
France	62.0
Canada	8.0
Belgium	4.0
USA	1.8
Switzerland	1.5
Haiti	1.0
Luxembourg	0.5
Italy	0.1



# Varieties

Francien (the dialect of Paris): standard language displacing the Langue d'Oïl.

Langue d'Oïl (northern and central France, and part of Belgium)

Langue d'Oc (southern France): survived as Occitan, closely linked to Catalan

Franco-Provençal (southeast France, Switzerland and Aosta valley in Italy): a literary form of Occitan.

9th-13th c. CE. Old French

14th-15th c. CE. Middle French

15th c. CE-present. Modern French

# Phonology

12 oral vowels, 4 nasal vowels (ẽ, œ, ã, õ)

several diphthongs

front vowels contrast unrounded-ness versus rounded-ness

20 consonants

Stress on last syllable of the word

Word boundaries tend to be blurred within phrases

phrasal boundaries are clearly marked.

# Vowels

	Front		Central	Back	
	<i>unrounded</i>	<i>rounded</i>		<i>unrounded</i>	<i>rounded</i>
High	i	y			u
High-mid	e	ø	ə		o
Low-mid	ɛ    ě	œ    ǽ			ɔ    ǔ
Low			a	ɑ    ǣ	

# Consonants

		<b>Labial</b>	<b>Dental</b>	<b>Palatal</b>	<b>Velar</b>	<b>Uvular</b>
<b>Stop</b>	<i>Voiceless</i>	p	t		k	
	<i>Voiced</i>	b	d		g	
<b>Fricative</b>	<i>Voiceless</i>	f	s	ʃ		
	<i>Voiced</i>	v	z	ʒ		ʁ
<b>Nasal</b>		m	n	ɲ		
<b>Liquid</b>			l			
<b>Glide</b>		w		j ɥ		



# Script and Orthography

Latin script - 26 letters - 3 accent markings

[ø] is represented by eu

[u] is represented by ou

é represents [e]

è and ê represent [ɛ]

[ʃ] is represented by ch

[ɲ] is represented by gn

[ɥ] is the sound of u before a vowel

nasal vowels are indicated by a following n or m

# Markings and More

three accent marks over vowels: acute over *é*; grave over *à* and *é*; circumflex over *â*, *ê*, *î*, *ô*, *û*.

diaeresis, or two dots over the vowel, shows that each vowel is pronounced separately as in *Noël* 'Christmas.'

A cedilla placed below the letter *ç* indicates that it is pronounced as [s].

There are two ligatures: *œ* and *æ*, e.g., *œil* 'eye', *bœuf* 'beef', *et cætera* 'et cetera.'

*w* and *k* are used exclusively in loanwords or foreign names.

# Latin Script and IPA

A a	B b	C c	D d	E e	F f	G g	H h	I i	J j	K k	L l	M m	N n
[a/ɑ]	[b]	[s/k]	[d]	[e/ɛ/ə]	[f]	[ʒ/g]	[h]	[i/j]	[ʒ]	[k]	[l]	[m]	[n]

O o	P p	Q q	R r	S s	T t	U u	V v	W w	X x	Y y	Z z
[o/ɔ]	[p]	[k]	[ʁ]	[s/z]	[t]	[y/u]	[v]	[v/w]	[ks/gz/s/z]	[i/j]	[z]

# Basic Morphology

considered an **analytic language**; various parts of the sentences are cut up into words

also considered a fusional **language** (not an **isolating language**!)

fusional affixes to express information

ils chant-ent, 3pl sing-3spl

# Gender

masculine & feminine

feminines are usually made by adding e to the masculine form (e.g., grand, grande)

frequently accompanied by phonetic changes at the end of the word (cruel, cruelle; jaloux, jalouse; acteur, actrice, etc)

adjectives ending in e have the same masculine-feminine form (e.g., large).

# Number

singular, plural

most plurals distinguished

orthographically but not phonetically

pluralize: add suffix -s

ending in -al: change -al to -aux

ending in eau, au, eu: add -x

nouns ending in s, x, z: no change

*homme* ('man') → *hommes* ('men')

*cheval* ('horse') → *chevaux* ('horses')

*eau* ('water') → *eaux* ('waters')

*feu* ('fire') → *feux* ('fires')

*bois* ('wood') → *bois* ('woods')

*noix* ('nut') → *noix* ('nuts')

*nez* ('nose') → *nez* ('noses')

# Personal and Possessive Pronouns

Personal pronouns:

- subject forms always precede the verb
- genderless except for the 3rd person singular
- have direct object, indirect object forms as well as disjunctive ones
- disjunctive forms: strong, used in isolation and in emphatic positions

Possessive pronouns:

- distinguish gender and number of possessed
- always preceded by the definite article

# Pronoun Forms

	<i>subject</i>	<i>object</i>	<i>disjunct.</i>	<i>possessive</i>
1s	je	me	moi	mien/mienne/miens/miennes
2s	tu	te	toi	tien/tienne/tiens/tiennes
3s. m.	il	le/lui	lui	sien/sienne/siens/siennes
3s. f.	elle	la/lui	elle	sien/sienne/siens/siennes
3s. imp.	on	---	soi	-----
1p	nous	nous	nous	nôtre/nôtres
2p	vous	vous	vous	vôtre/vôtres
3p. m.	ils	les/leur	eux	leur/leurs
3p. f.	elles	les/leur	elles	leur/leurs



# Demonstrative pronouns

	<i>m.s.</i>	<i>f.s.</i>	<i>m.p.</i>	<i>f.p.</i>
<i>near</i>	celui-ci	celle-ci	ceux-ci	celles-ci
<i>far</i>	celui-là	celle-là	ceux-là	celles-là

existence of demonstrative adjective  
(‘this’ or ‘that’):

proximal and distal forms  
distinguish gender and number

- ce/cet (m.s.)
- cette (f.s.)
- ces (common gender, plural)

# Interrogative Pronouns

qui ('who?'), que ('what?'), qu'est-ce qui / que ('what?'), lequel ('which?')

- qu'est-ce qui is used as a subject
- que and qu'est-ce qui are for the direct object
- que requires an inversion of the subject

*que faites-vous?*

*qu'est-ce qui vous faites?*

Literal Meaning: 'what are you doing?'

# Articles

indefinite, definite and partitive articles

indefinite article forms: un (m.s), une (f.s), des (m.p., f.p)

definite article forms: le (m.s), la (f.s), les (m.p., f.p)

partitive article:

- used with uncountable nouns
- forms are du (m.s), de la (f.s), de l' (m.s, f.s, front of vowel), des (m.p., f.p)

# Tense

Primary: present, imperfect, simple past, future

Compound tenses (perfect, pluperfect, past anterior, future perfect): formed using an auxiliary verb (mostly *avoir* 'to have', sometimes *être* 'to be') + past participle

simple past is not used in spoken French, it is only a literary form

three singular persons of present and imperfect and their third plural - homophonic in most verbs, but distinguished in writing

conjugated verb always requires presence of a personal subject pronoun

# Conjugation

verb: donner  
'to give'

mood: indicative

	<i>present</i>	<i>imperfect</i>	<i>simple past</i>	<i>future</i>
1s	donne	donnais	donnai	donnerai
2s	donnes	donnais	donnas	donneras
3s	donne	donnait	donna	donnera
1p	donnons	donnions	donnâmes	donnerons
2p	donnez	donniez	donnâtes	donnerez
3p	donnent	donnaient	donnèrent	donneront
	<i>perfect</i>	<i>pluperfect</i>	<i>past anterior</i>	<i>future perfect</i>
1s	ai donné	avais donné	eus donné	aurai donné
2s	as donné	avais donné	eus donné	auras donné
3s	a donné	avait donné	eut donné	aura donné
1p	avons donné	avons donné	eûmes donné	aurons donné
2p	avez donné	aviez donné	eûtes donné	aurez donné
3p	ont donné	avaient donné	eurent donné	auront donné

# Mood

indicative, subjunctive (present and imperfect), imperative, conditional

compound tenses of non-indicative moods use same auxiliaries as the indicative (avoir or être)

imperfect subjunctive is only a literary form

past imperative is very rare, and used only to give a command for something that must be done before a certain time

# Verb '*donne*' in different moods

	SUBJUNCTIVE		CONDITIONAL	IMPERATIVE
	<i>present</i>	<i>imperfect</i>	<i>present</i>	<i>present</i>
1s	donne	donnas se	donnerais	
2s	donnes	donnas ses	donnerais	donne
3s	donne	donnât	donnerait	
1p	donnions	donnas sions	donnerions	donnons
2p	donniez	donnas siez	donneriez	donnez
3p	donnent	donnas sent	donneraient	
	<i>perfect</i>	<i>pluperfect</i>	<i>perfect</i>	<i>perfect</i>
1s	aie donné	eusse donné	aurais donné	
2s	aies donné	eusse donné	aurais donné	aie donné
3s	ait donné	eût donné	aurait donné	
1p	ayons donné	eussions donné	aurions donné	
2p	ayez donné	eussiez donné	auriez donné	ayez donné
3p	aient donné	eussent donné	auraient donné	

# Voicing and non-finite forms

active & passive voice

non-finite forms include infinitives (present and past), present participles, past participles

present infinitive: *donner*

past infinitive: *avoir donné*

present participle: *donnant*

past participle: *donné*



# Syntax

Subject-Verb-Object (SVO)

everyday speech is flexible and several other orders are possible

case system of Latin no longer exists in French

prepositions are used to indicate syntactic relations

nouns usually accompanied by determiners (articles, demonstratives, possessives) carrying info about Gender & Number [which are not consistently marked on the noun]

verbal phrase subject pronouns are obligatory as 4 / 6 persons are homophonic

# a sentence

J'aime la mer ('I love the sea')

S V O

j' (je before a vowel): subject pronoun (1st. sg.)

aime: verb (1st/3rd. sg. of aimer)

la: definite article, fem. sg. (determiner)

mer: noun (fem. sg.)

# another sentence

Il aime les mers ('He loves the seas')

S    V        O

il: subject pronoun (3rd. sg. masc.)

les: definite article plural (masc. sg.) (determiner)

mers: noun (fem. pl.). Pronounced [mer]

## two more sentences

La mer, je l'aime ('The sea, I love it')

$O_1$       S  $O_2$  V

l' (la before a vowel): object pronoun

Je l'aime, la mer ('I love it, the sea')

S  $O_1$  V  $O_2$

# Interrogation

question-forming particle, *est-ce que*, placed at the beginning of the sentence without change in word order

when interrogative words are used, the order subject-verb is inverted in the literary language. This may be avoided in speech

*Le train part demain* (declarative)

*Est-ce que le train part?* (interrogative particle)

*Quand part le train?* (interrogative word and inversion)

*Quand le train part?* (interrogative word without inversion)

*Le train part quand?* (interrogative word without inversion)

*Quand est-ce que le train part?* (interrogative word + particle without inversion)

# Negative Statement

usually involves a double negation

a pre-verbal element (ne)

post-verbal element (pas, plus, point, rien, personne, jamais)

informal speech: ne is frequently omitted

*Le train part* (affirmative)

*Le train ne part pas* (negative formal)

*Le train part pas* (negative informal)

# Adjectives

in general, French adjectives are placed after the noun they describe

**une maison blanche** (*a white house*)

**un visage intéressant** (*an interesting face*)

**des gâteaux délicieux** (*delicious cakes*)

adjectives that refer to some specific qualities must precede the noun they describe instead of following it

B for beauty: **beau** (*beautiful*), **joli** (*pretty*)

A for age: **jeune** (*young*), **vieux** (*old*), **nouveau** (*new*)

G for goodness: **bon** (*good*), **meilleur** (*better*), **mauvais** (*bad*), **gentil** (*kind*)

S for size: **petit** (*small*), **haut** (*high*), **gros** (*fat*)

# Lexicon

basic vocabulary derives from the Latin spoken in Gaul

new borrowings from Latin

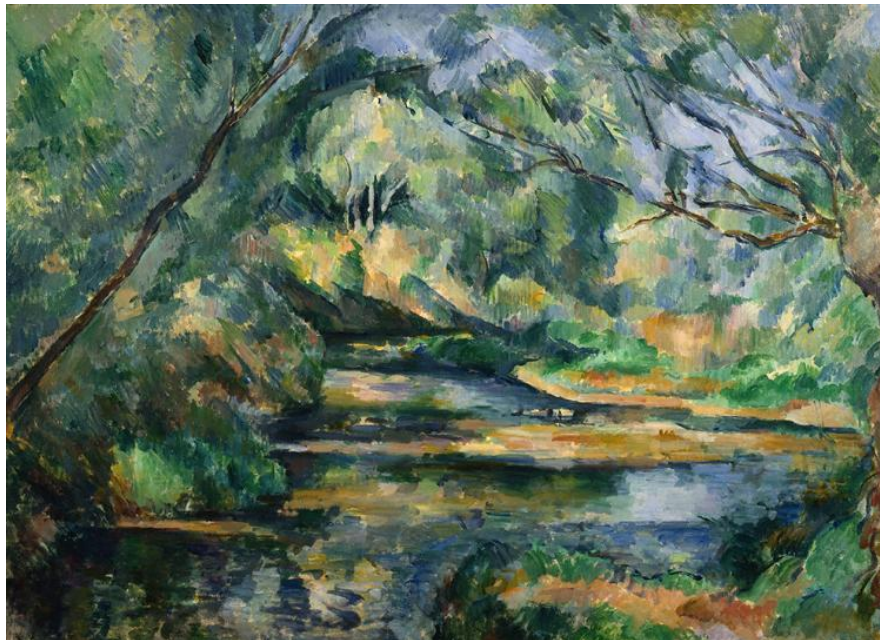
significant loanwords from Greek and Germanic - the Franks were of Germanic origin

today, English is the principal source of loanwords



# Basic Color Terms

1. *Rose* — Pink
2. *Orange* — Orange
3. *Rouge* — Red
4. *Jaune* — Yellow
5. *Vert* — Green
6. *Bleu* — Blue
7. *Violet* — Purple
8. *Pourpre* — Reddish Purple
9. *Noir* — Black
10. *Blanc* — White
11. *Gris* — Gray



## Kinship Terms

father: père

mother: mère

brother: frère

sister: sœur

son: fils

daughter: fille

## Body Parts

head: tête

face: visage

eye: œil

hand: main

foot: pied

heart: cœur

tongue: langue

## Numerals

one: un

two: deux

three: trois

four: quatre

five: cinq

six: six

seven: sept

eight: huit

nine: neuf

ten: dix

hundred: cent

# More on Numerals

standard French counting system is partially vigesimal

uses *vingt* ‘twenty’ as a base for numbers 80-99

*quatre-vingts* ‘eighty’ literally ‘4 times 20’

comparable to the archaic English use of *score* ‘twenty’, as in *fourscore* ‘eighty’.



Merci