

Languages of the World

When: Saturday, March 1, 2014
10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Where: inlingua Aventura Center
Concorde Plaza
19020 NE 29th Avenue
Aventura, Florida 33180

What: A six hour Professional Development Program
Special Topics Workshop.

Who: All inlingua instructors and staff.

Trainer: Richard E. McDorman, Director of Programs and Professional Development



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There are approximately 5,000 – 7,000 mutually unintelligible languages spoken throughout the world today (because the term “language” is itself not well-defined, as will be addressed during the workshop, a precise value is impossible to calculate). These languages represent an incredible degree of diversity in terms of their grammatical structures, sound systems, vocabularies and the means by which their speakers interpret the world around them. While many linguistics believe that all of the world’s languages ultimately trace their ancestry back to a single Proto-World language spoken at least 50,000 years ago, this assertion remains an unproved—and perhaps unprovable—hypothesis. We do know, however, that most of the extant languages of the world cluster into a few dozen “language families,” each of whose members trace their origins back to an earlier proto-language. On the other hand, a handful of the world’s languages (such as Basque, Burushaski and Ket) exist as isolates, unrelated to any other known languages.

During this six-hour Special Topics Workshop, we will **explore the many diverse language families of the world**, with particular attention paid to (1) how language families develop over thousands of years, (2) the various ways in which languages may differ and the ways in which they are similar, and (3) the sharp decline from the world’s period of maximum linguistic diversity approximately 15,000 years ago to the precipitous loss of languages and entire language families that has taken place in modern times. In addition, the following questions will be addressed: What is the difference between a language and a dialect? How do linguists determine whether different languages and language groups are related? How and why are languages categorized syntactically (i.e., based on their word order) and morphologically (i.e., based on word formation)? What are the world’s major language families, and where are they spoken?

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Please confirm your attendance with Assistant Director Sandra Manso at smanso@inlingua-if.com.