

VANGUARD PRESENTS



A trip around PHS world languages

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Italian



"Life"

Like many other romance languages, Italian stems from Latin. However, there were many local and vernacular forms of the language present throughout Italy. It wasn't until the unification of Italy in 1861 that the Tuscan dialect was adopted as the official language. As the official language of music, many musicians will be familiar with smatterings of Italian, from piano and fortissimo and to the nimble pizzicato.

Why do you think people choose to learn Italian?

"You can apply [Italian] to music, you can apply it to fashion, you can apply it to medicine, you can apply it to food. You can apply it to technology, you can apply it to any discipline, even for pharmacy, for art, you can apply it to all sorts of things. And Italia is a small country, but it leads in so many things, and it is present in so many different areas that people don't know." - Laura Francolino, Italian teacher

85 million speakers



French

"Lyrical"



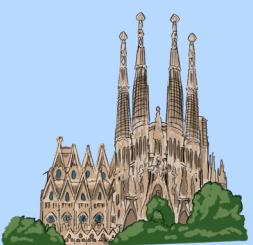
The language of love. The language of diplomacy. And the language of exchange in over 106 countries and territories. French's widespread usage stems from imperialistic endeavors in the 19th century, but today the language is the official language of 32 countries. In 58 BC, however, France, then Gaul, was itself the subject of invasion, and the birth of the French language started from a mix of Latin, Celtic, and Germanic languages. Sound changes such as the loss of final consonants have led to the unique phonological properties of the language. The usage of French around the world continues to grow: fueled by the growth of African Francophone countries, French may be the third-most spoken language in the world by 2050.

How does learning French help students later in life?

"In later life, I've had [previous students] come back and [they've] told me that they've continued with French. They've done their study abroad and sometimes they've moved away and they've used French... They lived in a French-speaking country and they needed French to function in a job." - Malachi Wood, French teacher

321 million speakers

Spanish



"Vibrant"

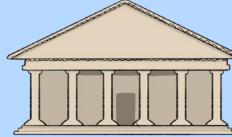
What do you enjoy most about teaching Spanish?

"[I enjoy] being able to share my own world, my own language, who I am, my own identity. And honestly, it's seeing when the light turns on, you know, immediately, and I see that the students are able to apply what they're learning and to use the language... It's not just something that they're learning to learn it. [For] all the students, this is a choice." - Idania Rodriguez-Mejia, Spanish teacher

For many high schoolers across the country, Spanish is the first foreign language they are exposed to. Indeed, the United States is home to the second-largest Spanish-speaking population after Mexico. Unique to Spanish is its influence from Arabic by virtue of its position on the Iberian Peninsula. While Latin has influenced Spanish like other romance languages, the Arabian conquest of the area for over 700 years undoubtedly left its mark.

560 million speakers

Latin



Latin

"Beautiful"

The ancestor to all the romance languages, Latin is the sole language offered at PHS that has no native speakers — yet its fundamental nature as the origin of nearly 70% of words in Romance languages has drawn countless PHS students to it. Originating from the lower Tiber River, Latin spread throughout Europe with the rise of the Roman Empire — at its peak, it was spoken across the Roman Empire, with nearly 800 authors and a surviving corpus of 10 million words. Although its lack of native speakers today, Latin still has a variety of uses, including in medicine, law, and science. It is also the official language of Vatican City.

Why do students choose Latin?

"We're clearly different because we're the only ancient language... what we're trying to do is learn the language to the point where you can access authentic texts... I think the ultimate goal of learning Latin is not fluency, it's cultural understanding. And it's a historical exercise, right? It's accessing a civilization and a culture that's old, but familiar." - Nolis Arkoulakis, Latin teacher

1.3 billion speakers



Japanese

"Cultural"

Known for having three writing systems, Japanese first started developing their own alphabet based on Chinese characters in the 4th century C.E. The characters, known as Kanji, began as simple pictorial representations of the words they represent, borrowing heavily from Chinese scripts. Modern Japanese is also written in two other scripts that developed during the 9th century: Hiragana and Katakana, both simplified versions of Kanji.

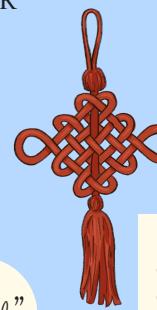
What are some strategies you have to teach students?

"Inside [the] classroom, we do a lot of chanting [and] we [memorize] a lot of folk songs, and then the students learn Japanese through those traditional Japanese folks... we do a lot of karaoke in the class. So whatever songs we sing, [they have] something to do with Japanese culture." - Risa Sakakibara, Japanese teacher

122 million speakers



Chinese



Chinese

"Engaging"

First originating thousands of years ago, Chinese is one of the oldest spoken languages in the world, with hundreds of different dialects and regional varieties. The tonal nature of the language, where changes in pitch define meaning, make it particularly challenging to learn. The language's writing system is also unique: it uses distinct and complex characters to represent words, rather than an alphabet system. The complexity of traditional Chinese characters led to the creation of simplified Chinese in the 1900s, in an attempt to increase literacy rates. This year marks the 20th year since the founding of the PHS Mandarin program.

What is the hardest thing to learn in Mandarin?

"[Mandarin has a totally different] alphabet... So the writing system is very complicated. [When] we design the curriculum, we would like to help the student to develop their understanding about the writing, reading, speaking, and listening, [as well as] the proficiency level." - Shwu-Fen Lin, Mandarin teacher





Basque in its glory

Jaisel Iyer, CONTRIBUTING WRITER

While most languages have evolved within a family from a common ancestor, the Basque language stands alone. Classified as a language isolate, Basque is unique due to the fact that it is unrelated to any other language. Spoken primarily in southwestern Europe, Basque has around 1,000,000 current speakers.

Basque first appeared in Latin texts dating from the 11th century. However, it was not until the 20th century when the rise of the Basque language occurred. In 1918, the Society of Basque held its first congress to create the Basque Language Academy in the following year. There was no conventional spelling system

in the Basque language due to the fact that it developed orally. Thus, reading and writing conventions were adopted from Spanish and French. By 1964, the Royal Basque Language Academy was able to develop a standardized spelling system, which paved the way for a unified language.



The Indo-European family has languages spoken across much of Europe and South Asia.
(English, Spanish, Hindi, Russian, German, etc.)

The Afro-Asiatic is one of the oldest language families, now spoken in the North Africa and West Asia.
(Arabic, Hebrew, Somali, Hausa, etc.)

The Niger-Congo family covers most of sub-Saharan Africa.
(Swahili, Yoruba, Fula, Zulu, etc.)

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Major language families

Finn Wedmid, VANGUARD CO-EDITOR

The Sino-Tibetan family includes languages spoken in China, Tibet, and Southeast Asia.
(Mandarin, Cantonese, Tibetan, Burmese, etc.)

Dravidian consists of about 70 languages concentrated primarily in southern India.
(Tamil, Tagulu, Brahui, etc.)

The Austronesian family has languages spanning from Madagascar to Easter Island, due to ancient maritime migrations.
(Malay, Tagalog, Hawaiian, Malagasy, etc.)

Idioms: then vs. now

Atharva Desai, CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Language is constantly changing. The way we talk today is not the same as how people spoke 50 years ago, or even 10 years ago. One of the most interesting aspects of language is idioms. These are phrases that don't mean what is literally said. For example, if someone says "couch potato," they don't mean the literal vegetable, but instead refer to someone who watches a large amount of television rather than exercising. Over the years, most idioms have been shortened, altering their meaning. In some cases, idioms have adapted to express the opposite meaning of what was originally intended.



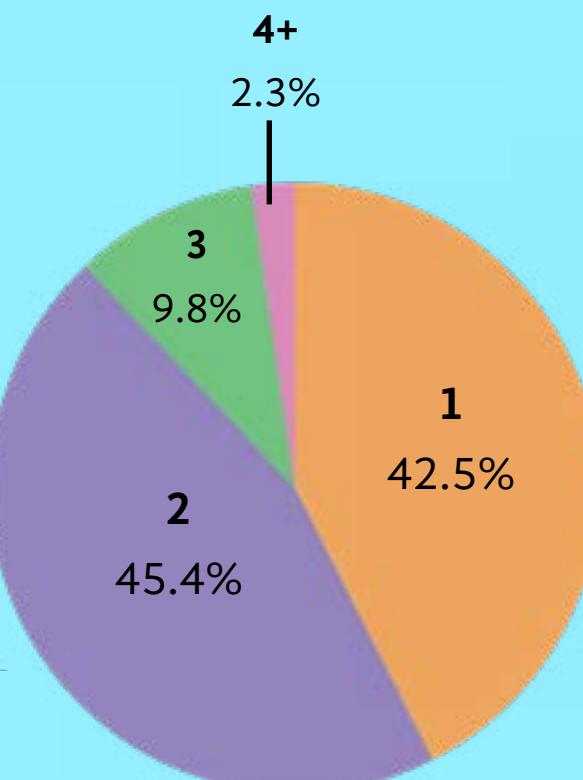
The early bird catches the worm...	...but the second mouse gets the cheese.
Curiosity killed the cat...	...but satisfaction brought it back.
Jack of all trades, master of none...	...sometimes better than master of one.
Great minds think alike...	...but only fools rarely differ.
Birds of a feather flock together...	...until the cat comes.
Winning isn't everything...	...it's the only thing.



A look inside PHS languages

Finn Wedmid, VANGUARD CO-EDITOR

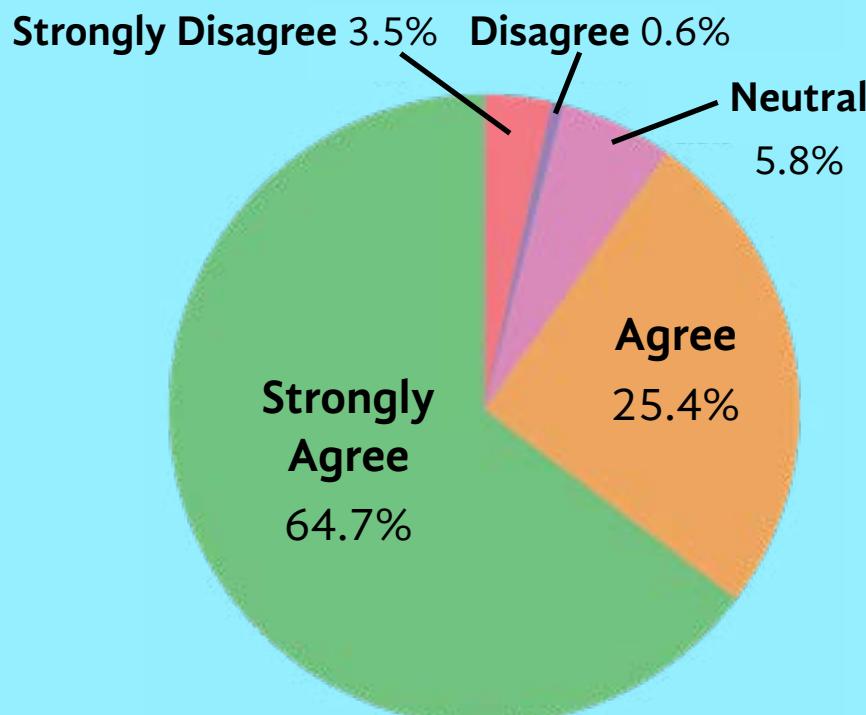
How many languages are you confident in speaking?



Rate your agreement with this statement:
My PHS language classes are helping me improve my...



Rate your agreement with this statement:
I believe being multilingual is a valuable skill.



22.5% of polled students believed that **German** should be offered as a school language. **Korean** was the second-most asked for new language choice at **6.6%**.

23.1% of polled students have gone on a foreign language exchange trip or will go on one this year.

This survey was administered during gym classes, in which 173 students completed the poll.

Indigenous language revival

Vanessa He, CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The Indian Civilization Act of 1819 led to forced assimilation in Indigenous boarding schools by suppressing the use of their languages and cultures. Consequently, over 300 Indigenous languages struggled to survive. Revitalizing these dying languages will open them to a new generation of speakers. Through language immersion programs, mentorships, and technology, these languages have slowly come back to daily life.

For example, the Wampanoag language had been dormant for around 150 years until 1993, when the Wampanoag Language Reclamation

Project began. Starting in Boston, where Wampanoag used to be spoken, this project involved collaboration with many universities and colleges such as Yale, Brown, and MIT. They were able to establish classes at several colleges taught by linguists.

For instance, Jessie Little Doe Baird, a member of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe, started working with linguist Ken Hale in analyzing historical Wampanoag documents. As a result, many graduate students were able to learn the grammar and vocabulary. This marked the first occasion where people around the world

recognized a Native American community's attempt to revitalize their dying language.

Myaamia, the language of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma died out in 1989. However, the community worked with Miami University by using archival documents to revive and reconstruct their language. The National Breath of Life program plays an important role in these partnerships, as the program provides training and technology to help many Indigenous communities across North America. These instances of language revival emphasize the necessity of sustaining these traditions.