

## Topic Page: [lingua franca](#)

Definition: **lingua franca** from *Philip's Encyclopedia*

Language that serves as communication between people who otherwise lack a common tongue. A lingua franca may be a simplified form of the dominant language, such as Pidgin English, or it may be a hybrid, such as Swahili, which consists of words of both Arabic and Bantu origins.

Summary Article: **lingua franca**

From *The Columbia Encyclopedia*

(*lɪŋˈɡwɑ frɑŋˈkɑ*), an auxiliary language, generally of a hybrid and partially developed nature, that is employed over an extensive area by people speaking different and mutually unintelligible tongues in order to communicate with one another. Such a language frequently is used primarily for commercial purposes. Examples are the several varieties of the hybrid pidgin English (see pidgin); Swahili, a native language of E Africa (see Swahili language); Chinook jargon, a lingua franca formerly used in the American Northwest that was a mixture of Chinook, other Native American languages, English, and French; and a variety of Malay (called *bazaar Malay*), which served as a compromise language in the area of British Malaya, the Dutch East Indies, and neighboring regions (see Malayo-Polynesian languages). The original lingua franca was a tongue actually called Lingua Franca (or Sabir) that was employed for commerce in the Mediterranean area during the Middle Ages. Now extinct, it had Italian as its base with an admixture of words from Spanish, French, Greek, and Arabic. The designation “Lingua Franca” [language of the Franks] came about because the Arabs in the medieval period used to refer to Western Europeans in general as “Franks.” Occasionally the term *lingua franca* is applied to a fully established formal language; thus formerly it was said that French was the lingua franca of diplomacy.

See Kahane, H. R. et al., *The Lingua Franca in the Levant* (1958);

Hall, R. A. Jr., *Pidgin and Creole Languages* (1966);

Heine, B. , *Status and Use of African Lingua Francas* (1970).

### **APA**

Chicago

Harvard

MLA

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Lingua Franca. (2018). In P. Lagasse, & Columbia University, *The Columbia encyclopedia* (8th ed.). New York, NY: Columbia University Press. Retrieved from [https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/lingua\\_franca](https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/lingua_franca)

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*The Columbia Encyclopedia*, © Columbia University Press 2018



## APA

Lingua Franca. (2018). In P. Lagasse, & Columbia University, *The Columbia encyclopedia* (8th ed.). New York, NY: Columbia University Press. Retrieved from [https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/lingua\\_franca](https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/lingua_franca)

## Chicago

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## Harvard

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## MLA

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