Mapping the world by language family dominance can help us see important human relationships. For example, the map below (cf. *The Human Mosaic* pp. 184-185) shows us that Guinea, Cameroon, and Zambia are linguistically similar; whereas Chad is very different. Iceland, Italy, Iran, northern India, and western Russia all have dominant languages that are Indo-European. Besides Indo-European, we see the geographic and demographic dominance of the Afro-Asiatic, Niger-Congo, Sino-Tibetan, and Austronesian language families. Looking at the Americas and Oceania, we can also see how colonial languages of the Germanic and Romance subfamilies have displaced the autochthonous languages of those continents.

Indo-European Family
- Slavic
- Germanic
- Romance
- Iranic
- Indic
- Other Indo-European

Afro-Asiatic Family
- Semitic
- Hamitic

- Altaic family
- Niger-Congo family
- Austronesian family
- Uralic family
- Sino-Tibetan family
- Austro-Asiatic family
- Japanese and Korean
- Other families

I = Inukitut
A = Amerindian
C = Caucasic
N-S = Nilo-Saharan
K = Khoisan
Ps = Paleosiberian
D = Dravidian
P = Papuan
Ab = Aborigine

Scale at latitude 35°

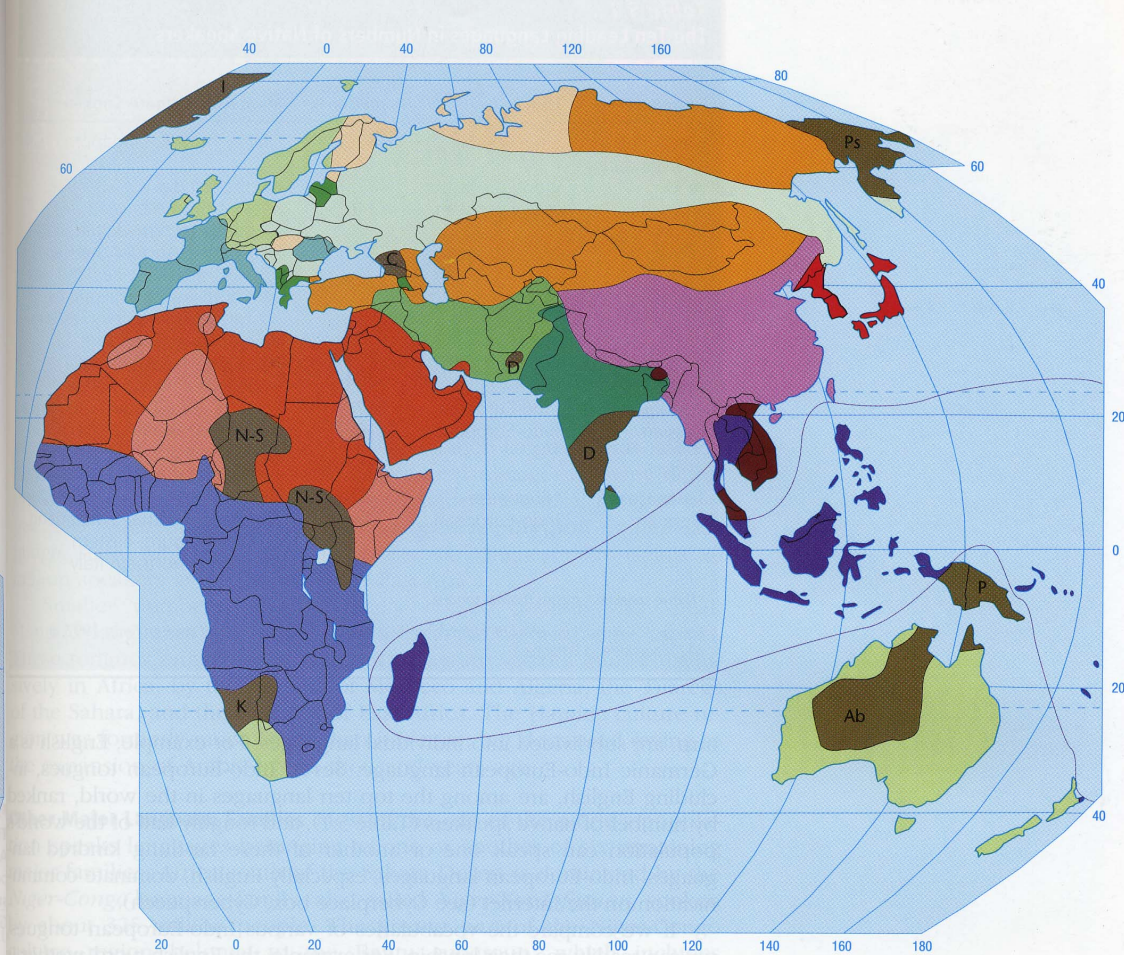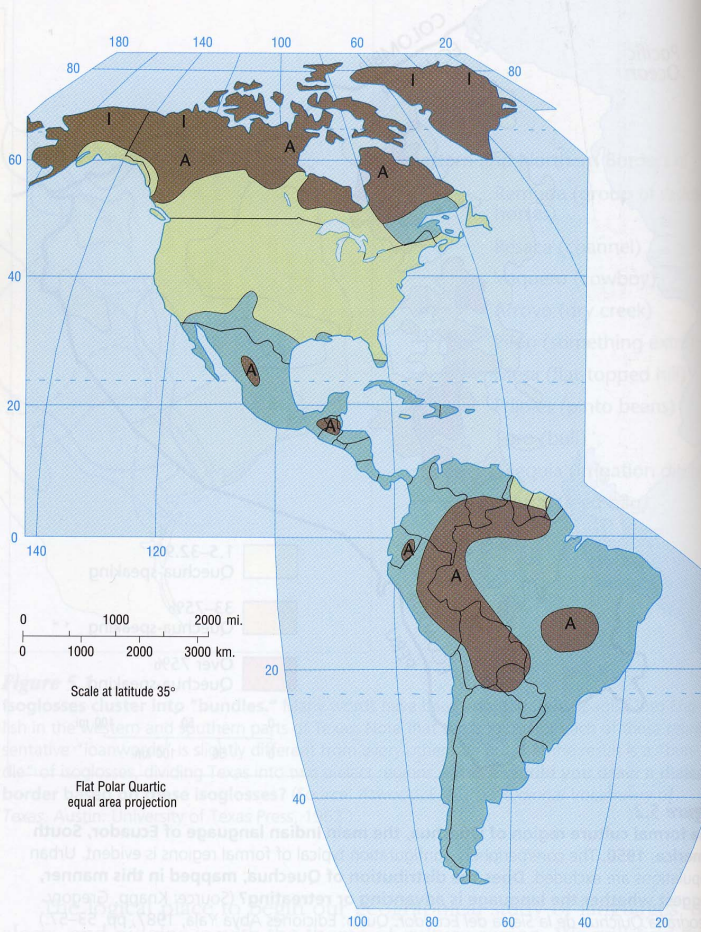Flat Polar Quartic equal area projection

Figure 5.3
The major linguistic culture regions of the world. Although there are thousands of languages and dialects in the world, they can be grouped into a few linguistic families. Note the broad extent of the Indo-European language family. English-speaking North Americans share Indo-European language roots with a wide variety of other cultural groups.