ETYMONOPOLY

NEEDED TO PLAY

- The Board
- Play money: 10 each of 1, 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, and 500 word notes
- 15 Change cards
- 15 Discovery cards
- 32 Reconstruction tokens
- 12 Proto-Language tokens
- 1 token per player
- 2 six-sided dice*
- 1 or more friends*

                    * Not included in the download

THE OBJECTIVE

Buy up every language on the board so you can reconstruct the Proto-Indo-European language and thereby win.

OVERVIEW

Move around the board, using your words wisely to obtain languages. If you land on a language owned by another player, you must pay them *data* from your words. Once you own an entire language family (2-3 languages of one colour), you can start developing reconstructions and proto-languages, thereby increasing the data you gain from other players. If you don't have the words for data, you may have to trade in some of your languages, and if you run out of property altogether, you lose and drop out of the game. Try to gain more than you lose, and beware of unexpected Changes or Discoveries, and the dreaded Language Death!

The language cards use the notation ₩ for words. It is *not* the currency symbol for the Korean won; it's just a homograph.

SET-UP

Place the board in the middle of the table. Shuffle the Change and Discovery cards separately and place them face-down in the indicated spots on the board. Separate the language cards by colour and slide each family (colour) partially under the board next to the appropriate language spaces. Do the same for the 2 Tocharian (white) and 4 branch (black) cards. Give each player a starting vocabulary of 1500 words like this:

- 2 notes of 500 words
- 2 notes of 100 words
- 4 notes of 50 words
- 3 notes of 20 words
- 3 notes of 10 words
- 1 note of 5 words
- 5 notes of 1 word
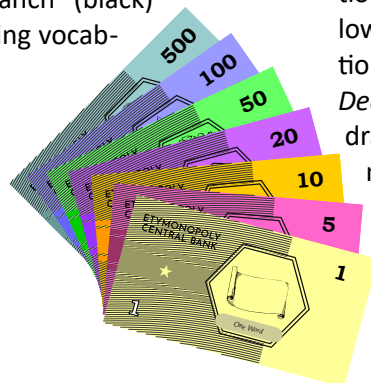
Note that all players are free to make change with the notes left in the "bank" at any time.
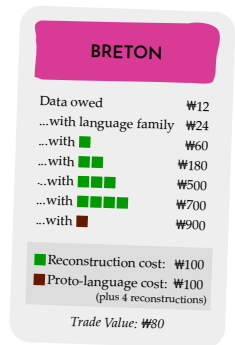
Each player places their token in the Language Evolution space. Roll the dice to determine who goes first. If two or more players are tied, then those players (only) roll again. Play then proceeds clockwise around the table.

THE CARDS

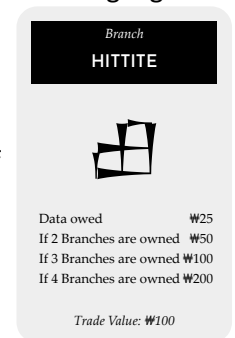Here are desciptions of the various kinds of cards included.

Language Cards

These cards list seven levels of data owed by visitors: one when undeveloped, one with the full family (all cards of the same colour owned), four with 1-4 reconstructions, and one with a proto-language. Also listed is the cost to develop a reconstruction or proto-language

BRETON	
Data owed	₩12
...with language family	₩24
...with ■	₩60
...with ■■	₩180
..with ■■■	₩500
...with ■■■■	₩700
...with ■	₩900

■ Reconstruction cost: ₩100
■ Proto-language cost: ₩100
(plus 4 reconstructions)
Trade Value: ₩80

guage (the two are always the same but still given separately), as well as the Trade Value (what the language is worth in trade).
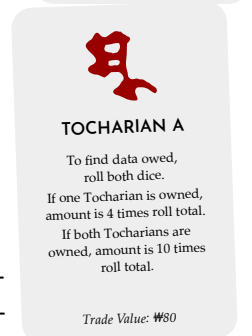
Branch Cards

Data for branches depends on the total number of branches owned, and they cannot be developed, so they list four data levels and a Trade Value (always 100 words).
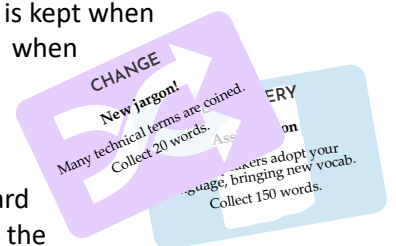
Branch
HITTITE

Data owed	₩25
If 2 Branches are owned	₩50
If 3 Branches are owned	₩100
If 4 Branches are owned	₩200

Trade Value: ₩100

Tocharian Cards

Both of these cards give instructions for determining data owed, and a Trade Value (always 80 words).

TOCHARIAN A

To find data owed,
roll both dice.
If one Tocharian is owned,
amount is 4 times roll total.
If both Tocharians are
owned, amount is 10 times
roll total.

Trade Value: ₩80

Change & Discovery Cards

These cards have unique instructions on them that should be followed immediately. The only exception is the *Get Out of Language Death Free* card, which is kept when drawn and used when needed to, well, get out of Language Death!

Once used, the card is returned to the

CHANGE
New jargon!
Many technical terms are coined.
Collect 20 words.

...ERY
...ation
Ass...

...kers adopt your
...uage, bringing new vocab.
Collect 150 words.

bottom of the appropriate deck, *face up*. If a face-up card comes up in a deck, shuffle that deck and place it back in place (face-down as usual).

Go or Advance? Several cards instruct you to "advance" to a specific space; others tell you to "go" there. The terminology is important because in the first case, you move space by space as usual, and thus may collect 200 words at Language Evolution. In the second, you move as though by teleportation, without traversing the intervening spaces.

Turn Sequence

On your turn, roll the dice and move your token on the board as many spaces as the sum of the dice. If you land on any space other than *Free Morphemes*, take the appropriate actions (see under **The Board**, below). Then *all* players can conduct business as desired. When ready, pass the dice to the next player.

Rolling Doubles

If both dice come up showing the same number ("doubles"), you're on a roll! (No pun intended.) (No, really.) After taking your turn as normal, roll again and take another turn, for free. And if the second roll is doubles as well, then you can roll yet again!

But! There is such a thing as too much of a good thing. If that third roll is also doubles, the language police take notice. Instead of taking another free turn, you must move your token directly to Language Death (see below).

The Board

Each of the various spaces on the board is discussed below in detail.

Languages & Language Families

Of the 40 spaces on the board, 22 are languages, grouped into 8 families. Most families consist of three languages, while two have only two. Each language space lists a purchase price in words. When, on your turn, you land on a language space, what happens next depends on whether it is owned or not.

Owned by a Player: Consult the language card to find how much data you owe, and pay the owner.

Unowned: Pay the listed amount to the bank and take the language card.

The Trade Value was introduced because the author of this version of these rules has a strong dislike of *Monopoly* auctions. Doing things this way requires no manager, as well as being arguably less likely to cause delay, extortion, bad blood, or divorces. If you absolutely, positively *must* have auctions, at least make sure beforehand that all players agree on this.

While in Language Death, you can still take part in all ordinary activities – you just can't move. So it's more like Language Paralysis.

Up for Grabs: If you can't or don't want to buy an unowned language, the opportunity passes to the other players. Offer it to the next player for the list price, and if declined, continue around the table. If no-one takes the deal, you again have the chance to buy, but the offer price drops to the Trade Value listed at the bottom the card. If everyone declines again, the Trade Value is halved for another round, then halved again for a final round. If the language remains unowned after this, return the card under the board; your turn is over.

Branches

There are four branches on the board: Hittite, Hellenic, Armenian, and Albanian. They work like a ninth language family, except that no reconstructions or proto-languages can be developed for them.

Tocharians

The Tocharian languages (A and B) can, again, be purchased just like ordinary languages, but payable data is determined by rolling the dice. If just one Tocharian is owned, the amount is four times the roll total; with both Tocharians, it is ten times the roll.

Change & Discovery

Draw the top card from the appropriate deck and follow its instructions.

Prescriptivism & Conservatism

While there is a positive side to both death and taxes, these spaces are undeniably bad things. You lose words and must return them to the bank.

Language Repression

This space sends you directly to Language Death. (See under **Chance & Discovery Cards**, above, for the distinction between Going and Advancing.)

Language Death & Close Call

When ordinary movement takes your token to this space, place it in *Close Call*. Nothing happens. Only when a rule sends you to Language Death (the *Language Repression* space, a Change or Discovery card, or rolling three doubles in a row), go to the darker *Language Death* area and stay there.

Getting Out: When in Language Death, there are three ways to get out again:

- Use a *Get Out of Language Death Free* card, if you have one. Return it to its deck and carry on.
- Pay the bank 50 words. It isn't a bribe, it's a fine.
- Roll the dice. If you roll doubles, you are free! If not, your turn ends – ***except*** if this was your third try this time in Language Death. After three tries, you *have to* pay or use a card, or lose the game.

Moving On: If you rolled the dice to get out, use that total to move. However, even if it was doubles, you don't roll again.

When moving on from Language Death (or Close Call), the next space is Irish. There is no need to move separately from Language Death to Close Call.

Language Evolution

The only space whose effect takes place when simply moving by, as well as when landing on it. Receive 200 words from the bank when you do. Note, however, that if your token *starts* in this space, it does *not* count as "passing" it.

Developing Languages

Once you own all (two or three) languages in a family, you can start developing those languages. This means purchasing reconstructions and, ultimately, proto-languages for them. The cost to do this is listed on each language card: pay the amount and place a token on the language space. No development is possible on branches or Tocharians.

Family Equality: All languages in a family must have the same number of reconstructions or proto-languages, plus or minus one. In other words, before buying a second reconstruction for a language, all languages in that family must have one reconstruction.

Proto-Languages: Even though a proto-language costs the same as a reconstruction, one can only be placed on a language which already has four reconstructions on it. When this happens, it replaces the reconstructions: return them to the bank.

Second Thoughts: If necessary, you can liquidate a development simply by returning it to the bank. You only get half price for it if you do, however.

You can develop languages at any time, no matter where on the board your token is. Just let the player whose turn it is to finish moving (and taking actions) first.

If a proto-language is sold, it is replaced by 4 reconstructions. They don't need to be developed again from scratch. On the other hand, if there aren't enough reconstructions left, then the proto-language cannot be sold!

Countermix Limit: The tokens in the download are a hard limit on development. Once all proto-languages (for example) are on the board, no more can be developed (unless and until one is sold back).

Mortgage was omitted because, while realistic (in the context of *Monopoly*), it adds complexity and drags out the game. Without that option, players have to trade their languages to each other, keeping the pace brisk.

Trading

An important part of the game is making trades – exchanging words, languages, or *Get Out of Language Death Free* cards between players (the bank has no interest). Trades may be formal or informal. When you owe data to another player, it is a formal trade; if you suggest an impromptu exchange to another player, that's informal.

No Developments: A language with developments cannot be traded. Any reconstructions or proto-languages must first be returned to the bank (at half price) before offering a language card in trade.

Formal Trades

Any card with a Trade Value listed can be traded for that value. However, you get ***no change***; if you owe six words but all you have is a hundred-word language, tough luck.

Informal Trades

In these cases, any card is worth whatever you can get for it, and you are free to refuse any trade that seems unfair.

How to Lose

Quite simply, whenever you owe any words to the bank or to another player, and don't have enough (even after trading in everything you own), you lose and are out of the game. Turn over whatever you have left, and take a sabbatical or something.

How to Win

The ultimate goal of Etymonopoly is to reconstruct the Proto-Indo-European language, which requires ownership of every language on the board. Depending on the bloody-mindedness of the players, there are two ways to determine this.

In the End There Can Be Only One: Drive all other players out of the game, one by one. When no-one else remains, the winner is obvious.

First Among Equals: As soon as one player loses, the game is over. Determine the winner by totalling the *full* value (purchase cost) of each player's languages and developments, and adding the amount of words they have on hand. The player with the highest total wins.

CREDITS

Monopoly is a registered trademark owned by Hasbro, Inc. No copyright infringement is intended; this is a tribute to that classic, at most a parody.

Etymonopoly was conceived by Ryan Starkey of Starkey Comics in a Facebook post on 15 July 2023.

This print-and-play edition was designed by Antti Hukkanen between February 2024 and January 2025[1].

Jenni Fielding's website Monopoly Land (monopoly-land.com) made researching the cards, dimensions, etc. a breeze. Much obliged.

ASSEMBLY SUGGESTIONS

There are three files to print in addition to these rules: the board, the notes and the cards. Make sure to print each at 100% scale. The dimensions are:

- **Board:** 480×480 mm (500×500 mm with margins) (18.9×18.9"/19.7×19.7")
- **Notes:** 52½×99 mm each (2.0×3.9")
- **Cards:** 57×89 mm each (2¼×3½")

Make extra copies of notes as needed (at least one copy of the 1-note page per two players, just for starting words).

The cards are two-sided (face and back). While they can be printed "duplex" (both sides at one time), this is *not* recommended, as the alignment is likely to be off. Either glue the two sides together, or (preferably) slip both inside some plastic "card protector" sleeves.

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TURN SEQUENCE

1. Roll the dice, advance on the board. If you land on:
   - a language, either purchase it or leave it Up for Grabs;
   - *Close Call* or *Free Morphemes*, do nothing;
   - otherwise, follow printed instructions.
2. If you rolled doubles, repeat step 1, up to twice. If the third roll is doubles, go to *Language Death*.
3. All players may conduct trades, develop languages, and/or liquidate developments.
4. Play proceeds to the left until someone wins.

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1   All the work was done in February and January. The rest of it was faffing about.