WHAT IS LINGUISTICS?
"THE SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF LANGUAGE"

Figure 1. The place of linguistics – vs. English/Germanic/Romance studies (etc.) – in academia

- science
  - natural sciences
    - physics
    - biology
  - biology
- social sciences
  - anthropology
  - sociology
  - psychology
  - linguistics
- humanities
  - ancient and modern languages
  - art
  - literature
  - history
  - philosophy
  - law

- academia

- empirical – based on the observation of what is
- critical/speculative – based on cultural norms and ideas of what should be

goal: discover the laws of nature

goal: discover and explain regularities of the mind, language, culture, and society
HOW DO WE DO LINGUISTICS?

- Field Methods
  - Interviews
  - Elicitation with stimuli

- Experimental Methods
  - Tasks to explore production, perception

- Corpus Linguistics
  - What do people actually say? Search a database

- Lots of data!
PRIMARY DOMAINS

- Phonetics/Phonology (Sound)
- Morphology (Word Structure)
- Syntax (Sentence Structure)
- Semantics (Meaning)
- Pragmatics and Discourse
**Phonology and Phonetics**

- **Phonetics**: the study of phonemes in terms of:
  - how they are produced (“articulatory”)
  - the physical properties of the sound wave (“acoustic”)
  - their perceptual qualities (“auditory”)

- **Phonology**: the study of how phonemes are used in particular languages
  - E.g., [l] and [r] are distinct phonemes in English, but not in Korean – yet their phonetic properties are the same

- **Issues**: categorization, perception & production, L2 acquisition

http://library.thinkquest.org/19537/Physics3.html
Morphology

- Shape/structure of words

- *Swimmingly*
  
  `<swim>` v. – to move in water by movements of the limbs, fins, tail, etc.  
  (dictionary.com)

  `<-ing>` inflectional suffix – puts v. in progressive form

  `<-ly>` derivational suffix – changes word class to adv.
SYNTAX

- Structure of sentences
- Grammatical relations (subject, object)
- Hierarchies, recursion, productivity

The lazy student told his neighbor about his girlfriend

“attribute value matrix” in Head-driven Phrase Structure Grammar
SEMANTICS

- Word meaning: “cat”
  - Relationship between words and concepts

- Sentence meaning
  - Every man loves a dog.
  - “I once shot an elephant in my pajamas.”

[Diagram showing the relationship between symbol, concept, and referent]
INTERSECTIONAL FIELDS

- Psycholinguistics & Neurolinguistics
  - Language Acquisition
  - Processing
  - Speech Errors
  - Aphasia
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- Sociolinguistics
- Computational linguistics
- Applied Linguistics
  - Language instruction
  - Sociolinguistics
  - Forensics
LANGUAGE AND COGNITION

- Linguistic categorization

Pie

Tart

Cake
LANGUAGE AND COGNITION

- Linguistic categorization
LANGUAGE AND COGNITION

- Linguistic categorization
- Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis (Linguistic Relativity Hypothesis)
  - Fuels research in Semantic Typology
  - Concepts are shaped by language
- Relationship between Language, Culture, and Thought
LINGUISTIC ANTHROPOLOGY

- Ethnography of communication
- Language and identity
- Pragmatics, power, politeness, and “face”
- Language ideology
- Ethnosemantics/Cognitive anthropology
- Linguistic Relativity
MY WORK

- Spatial language in *Diidxa za* (Isthmus Zapotec)
- Field Methods
  - Matching task to elicit spatial reference frames
  - Listing task to elicit landscape terms
  - Route description task to explore salience of landscape features
  - Memory task
- Quantitative methods
- Semantic Typology
  - What is the role of language and local landscape in determining how people think about space?
- Language documentation & revitalization
QUESTIONS?