Linguistic Typology: Variation Across The World

LING 001

Julie Anne Legate

Morphological Inventory

- Inventory differences also show up in morphology; consider number
  - English: *Singular* and *Plural*
    - *one dog – two dogs*
  - Warlpiri: *Singular, Dual, Paucal, Plural*:
    - karnta   "woman"
    - karnta-jarra   "two women"
    - karnta-patu   "a few women"
    - karnta-karnta   "women"

- As with phonological features, there is a universal inventory from which languages choose a subpart

Morphological Typology

- What is expressed in a word differs greatly from language to language
- Languages are typically divided into two broad classes, although most languages are intermediate between them
- Analytic
- Synthetic (Agglutinative, Fusional, Polysynthetic)

Analytic

- (aka isolating language)
- most morphemes are free
- e.g. Vietnamese

khi tôi dên nhà ban tôi, chúng tôi bát dâu làm bài.

when I come house friend I plural I begin do lesson

"When I came to my friend's house, we began to do lessons"

Synthetic: Agglutinative

- Most morphemes are bound
- Morphemes express a single piece of meaning and are strung one after the other
- e.g. Finnish

kirjo + i + ssa + ni   (some phono ignored)

book + plural + Locative + my

"in my books"

- Basque, Blackfoot, Georgian, Turkish, Korean, Tamil, …

Synthetic: Fusional

- Most words are polymorphemic
- Morphemes express many meanings, and cannot be further divided
- e.g. Latin

  bon + us

  good + masculine.nominative.plural

- Russian, German, Polish, Lithuanian

Synthetic: Polysynthetic

- Synthetic languages that in addition show productive noun incorporation

Mapudungun (Chile, Argentina)

Ni chao kintu-waka-le-y

my father seek-cow-Tense-3sg

'my father is looking for the cows'

- Mohawk (Quebec, Ontario, western New York), Nahuatl (central Mexico), Inuktitut, Central Siberian Yupik, Chukchi (Siberia)