Lexical semantics: kinship terminology
but first!

My Hovercraft is Full of Eels

foo-joQ n3Q!t’ek-ðig jɔq-ðig-çix g#an-ðig thènr3q-t’3!-t’axq-ðig-jɔik’
is 1st hovercraft 1 I 1 GEN full 1 eel1 2 * 12 ^1 INSTR.2
“My hovercraft is full of (24) eels.”

--Murtallian Standard

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and also!

ly xεve mίnoxεvet3
I speak mίnoxεve-ΙΝΣΤΡ
‘I speak mίnoxεve’

damotite skotri ly ʃ3 ɣ3 spruhe
car-POSS above I hold fish long
‘My hovercraft is full of eels’

-- mίnoxεve

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Moreover!

асял атондо рофа ёусуг няким ил дугонаф
‘My hovercraft is full of eels’

--Wushgag

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In addition:

dae  iga  bigir\ku  eba  satei  ski  akai\osa  fezitopu

I(1p.sg) GEN  hovercraft  ABS  be  contain(pp.)  maximum amount  eel

‘My hovercraft is full of eels.’

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Also:

go zæbo χακυ ϕαϕα de
filled hovercraft my eels with
--Zak^o
And finally:

My hovercraft is full of cleaning droids.

--Universal Humanoid Language 46
Next week’s sentence:

“I have eaten the plums that were in the icebox, and which you were probably saving for breakfast.”
I said earlier that probably every language has a word for ‘eat’.

but…
Not every language has a word for

*karnjal* (Lardil):  
“lightning so far away that no thunder can be heard”
Not every language has a word for

*karnjal* (Lardil):
“lightning so far away that no thunder can be heard”

*wabi-sabi* (Japanese):
“beauty associated with impermanence and imperfection”
Not every language has a word for

\textit{karnjal} (Lardil):
\begin{quote}
“lightning so far away that no thunder can be heard”
\end{quote}

\textit{wabi-sabi} (Japanese):
\begin{quote}
“beauty associated with impermanence and imperfection”
\end{quote}

\textit{Ohrwurm} (German)
\begin{quote}
“tune which gets stuck in your head”
\end{quote}
\begin{quote}
(‘ear-worm’; now borrowed)
Láadan (Suzette Haden Elgin, *Native Tongue*)

*ramimelh*

‘to refrain from asking with malicious intent’

*dóoledosh*

‘pain or loss that comes as a relief
by virtue of ending the anticipation of its coming’
Sometimes differences in vocabulary can be thought of as differences in which concepts are ‘grouped’ together…

English

*finger*

*toe*
Sometimes differences in vocabulary can be thought of as differences in which concepts are ‘grouped’ together…

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Mongolian</th>
<th>Tagalog</th>
<th>Japanese</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>finger</td>
<td>huruu</td>
<td>daliri</td>
<td>yubi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>toe</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
‘Hand’ and ‘arm’:

(yellow=same word, red=different words)

Image courtesy of WALS. (License: CC-BY)
Japanese *oyu* ‘hot water’, *mizu* ‘water’

Lardil *thurarra* ‘Elasmobranch’

*nyuda* ‘fire, wood’
*werne* ‘food, edible animal’
(yarburr ‘inedible animal’)
Kinship systems

One classic system for talking about kinship terms dates back to the ‘50s, but is still in use; it classifies systems by their terms for parents, uncles, aunts, siblings, and cousins.

Works pretty well, though there are complications, as we’ll see (we are going to mostly ignore words for siblings on the first pass, for example).

It classifies systems into six major types:
    Hawaiian, Sudanese, Eskimo, Iroquois, Omaha, Crow
Kinship systems

one extreme: Hawaiian

three terms:
  one for one’s mother and aunts (red)
  another for one’s father and uncles (blue)
  a third for one’s siblings and cousins (yellow)

https://umanitoba.ca/faculties/arts/anthropology/tutor/kinterms/termsys.html

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Kinship systems

one extreme: Hawaiian

three terms:
  one for one’s mother and aunts (red) *makuahini*
  another for one’s father and uncles (blue) *makuakane*
  a third for one’s siblings and cousins (yellow) *complicated…*
  *kaikua’ana* ‘same-sex’, *kaikuana* ‘woman’s bro’, *kaikuhine* ‘man’s sis’

https://umanitoba.ca/faculties/arts/anthropology/tutor/kinterms/termsys.html

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Kinship systems

the other extreme: Sudanese

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different words for every kind of uncle, aunt, cousin…
Kinship systems

the other extreme: Sudanese

Latin is an example:

Latin/Ancient Roman Kinship Terms

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Kinship systems

questions to ask, getting from Hawaiian to Sudanese...

• do I distinguish my parents and their children from my aunts, uncles, and cousins? → “Eskimo”

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Kinship systems

questions to ask, getting from Hawaiian to Sudanese…

• do I distinguish my parents and their children from my aunts, uncles, and cousins? → “Eskimo”

• “sort of”? (bifurcate merging) → “Iroquois”

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Lardil has an Iroquois system, as far as that goes…

```
kaku     ngama     ngama = kantha  kantha  merrka
      /          \            /          \         /
yurrwardin  yaku, kungku, thabu  yurrwardin  
```

\[ kaku \]
\[ ngama \]
\[ ngama = kantha \]
\[ kantha \]
\[ merrka \]
\[ yurrwardin \]
\[ yaku, kungku, thabu \]
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Kinship systems

questions to ask, getting from Hawaiian to Sudanese...

• do I distinguish my parents and their children from my aunts, uncles, and cousins?  \( \rightarrow \) \textbf{“Eskimo”}

• “sort of”? (bifurcate merging)  \( \rightarrow \) \textbf{“Iroquois”}

• do I use terms for ‘aunt’ and ‘uncle’ to refer to certain cross-cousins? (skewing)
Kinship systems

“Omaha”: variant of Iroquois,
with skewing for mother’s brother’s children:

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Iroquois system, plus
special terms for your mother’s brother’s children:
“mother” for his daughter, and
“mother’s brother” for his son.
Kinship systems

an example of an Omaha system:

Dani Kin Terms

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Kinship systems

“Crow”: variant of Iroquois,
with skewing for father’s sister’s children:

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Father’s sister’s son: “father”
Father’s sister’s daughter: “father’s sister”
Other terminological distinctions for siblings, children:

- relative age
- gender of speaker, referent
Siblings: Lardil

*man speaking*

thabu ‘older brother’
kungku ‘younger brother’
yaku ‘sister’

*woman speaking:*

kungku ‘brother, younger sister’
yaku ‘older sister’
Siblings: Tagalog

kapatid ‘brother, sister’
Siblings: Tagalog

kapatid  ‘brother, sister’
ate  ‘older sister’  \textit{(old Hokkien borrowings)}
kuya  ‘older brother’
### Siblings: Tagalog

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>kapatid</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>kuya</td>
<td>‘older brother’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ditse</td>
<td>‘second oldest sister’</td>
<td>(more recent Hokkien borrowings)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sanse</td>
<td>‘third oldest sister’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sitse</td>
<td>‘fourth oldest sister’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diko</td>
<td>‘second oldest brother’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sangko</td>
<td>‘third oldest brother’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>siko</td>
<td>‘fourth oldest brother’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Siblings: Wampanoag

*man speaking:*
neemat ‘my brother’
neechoy ‘my younger brother’

neetahty ‘my sister’
neetopas ‘my sister’
numuhsees ‘my older sister’

neeeshumus ‘my younger sibling’
Siblings: Wampanoag

*man speaking:*
neemat ‘my brother’
neechay ‘my younger brother’
neetahty ‘my sister’
neetôpas ‘my sister’
umuhsees ‘my older sister’

*woman speaking:*
neetôpas ‘my brother’
nunahtônunqu ‘my younger brother’
neetukushq ‘my sister’
umuhsees ‘my older sister’

neehtahty ‘my sibling’
neehtumus ‘my younger sibling’