Lexical semantics: kinship terminology

but first!

My Hovercraft is Full of Eels
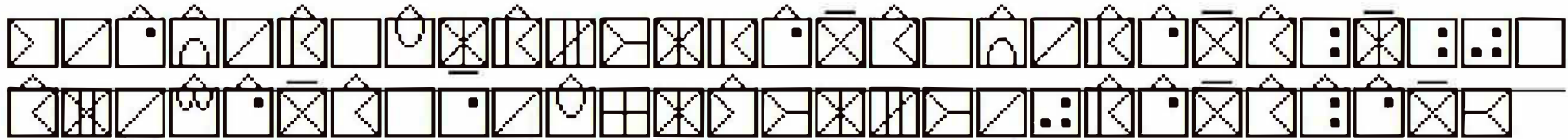
ʈɤð-jɤǫ̈   nʒǫ̈!t'ək-ðig jɤǫ̈-ðig-çɨçx g‡aŋ-ðig θanrʒɖ-t'ʒ!-t'axǫ̈-ðig-ɟðik'
is   1st   hovercraft 1   I   1   GEN full   1   eel[1]   2 * 12   ^1   INSTR.[2]
"My hovercraft is full of (24) eels."

--Murtallian Standard

and also!

ly xɛve mɪnoxɛvetɜ
I   speak mɪnoxɛve-INSTR
'I speak mɪnoxɛve'

damotite skotri ly ʃlɜ   ɣɜ spruhe
car-POSS   above I hold fish long
'My hovercraft is full of eels'

-- mɪnoxɛve

Moreover!

aʃgal atondoɹoʃa θusug nɹakɪn il ðugoɹaʃ
'My hovercraft is full of eels'
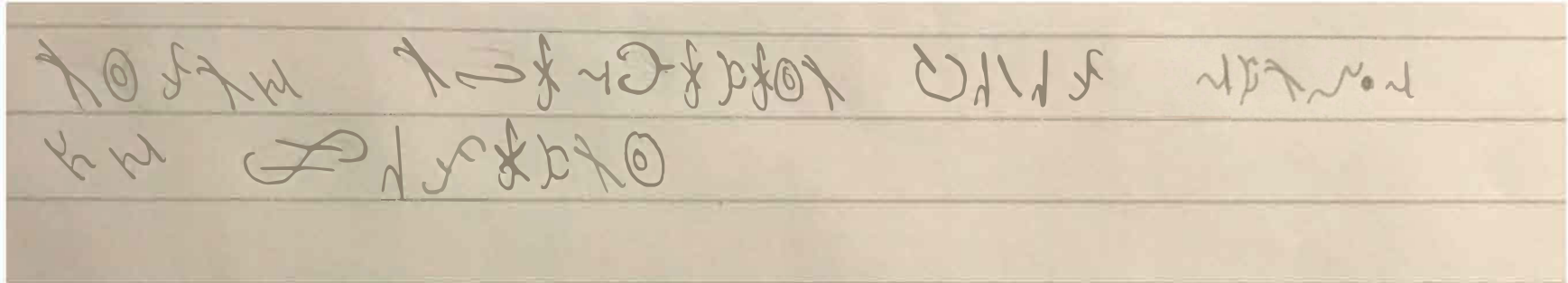
--Wushgag

In addition:

dæ	ɪga	bɪgirʌku	ɛba	sateɪ	ski	akaɪθosa	fɛzitopu
I(1p.sg)	GEN	hovercraft	ABS	be	contain(pp.)	maximum amount	eel

'My hovercraft is full of eels.'

Also:

go   zaʒebo   χaku ɸaɸa de
filled hovercraft my   eels   with

--Zak^ho

And finally:

띳 清er   air车ㄱ
tiʒ kœʃisy   kapɯŋkykɯj
fill cleaningdroid (NOM1) hovercar.my (ACC1)
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

karnjal (Lardil):
"lightning so far away that no thunder can be heard"
wabi-sabi (Japanese):
"beauty associated with impermanence and imperfection"
Ohrwurm (German)
"tune which gets stuck in your head"
('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…

English	Mongolian	Tagalog	Japanese
finger	*huruu*	*daliri*	*yubi*
toe			

'Hand' and 'arm':
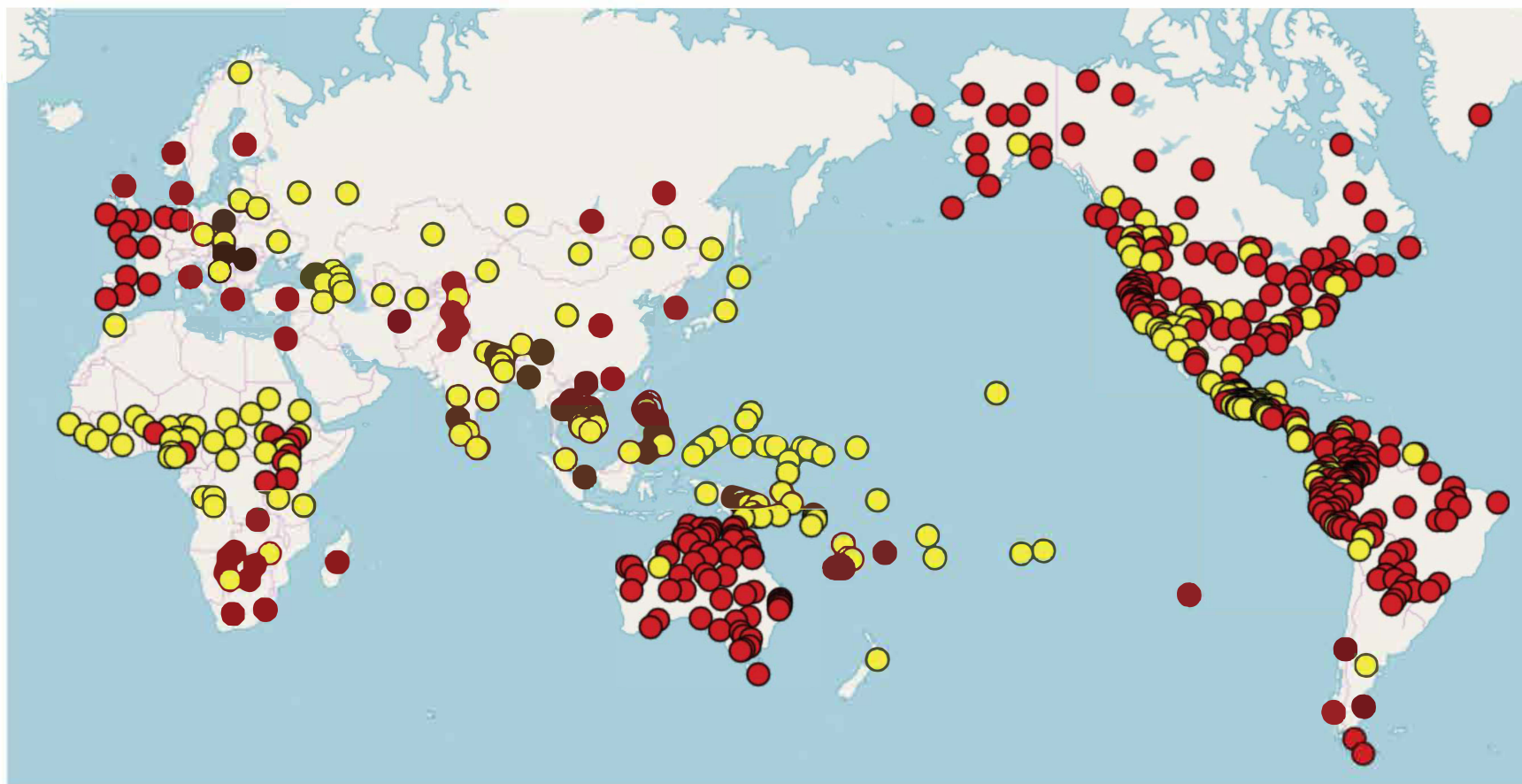
(yellow=same word, red=different words)

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

This image has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

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)

Kinship systems

one extreme: Hawaiian

This image has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

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'*,* *kaikuahine* 'man's sis'

Kinship systems

the other extreme: Sudanese

This image has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

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

Kinship systems

the other extreme: Sudanese

Latin is an example:

Latin/Ancient Roman Kinship Terms

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

This image has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

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"**

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

This image has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

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"**

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

This image has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

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

kaku   ngama   ngama = kantha   kantha   merrka

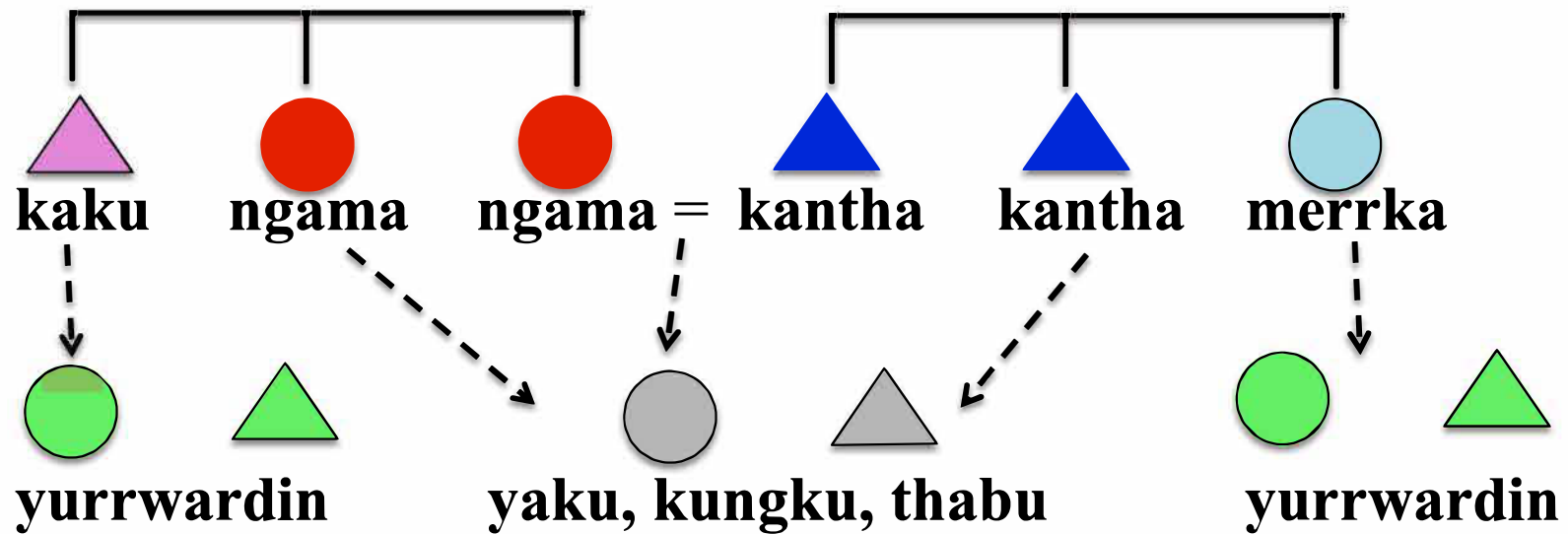yurrwardin   yaku, kungku, thabu   yurrwardin

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**"

- 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:

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

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

This image has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

Kinship systems

"**Crow**": variant of Iroquois,
      with skewing for father's sister's children:

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

This image has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

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'   (*old Hokkien borrowings*)
kuya   'older brother'

Siblings: Tagalog

kapatid   'brother, sister'

ate   'older sister'   (*old Hokkien borrowings*)
kuya   'older brother'

ditse   'second oldest sister' (*more recent Hokkien*
sanse   'third oldest sister'   *borrowings*)
sitse   'fourth oldest sister'

diko   'second oldest brother'
sangko   'third oldest brother'
siko   'fourth oldest brother'

Siblings: Wampanoag

man speaking:
neemat 'my brother'
neechay 'my younger brother'

neetahty 'my sister'
neetôpâs 'my sister'
numuhsees 'my older sister'

neehsumus 'my younger sibling'

Siblings: Wampanoag

man speaking:
neemat 'my brother'
neechay 'my younger brother'

neetahty 'my sister'
neetôpâs 'my sister'
numuhsees 'my older sister'

neehsumus 'my younger sibling'

woman speaking:
neetôpâs 'my brother'
nunahtônuqus 'my younger brother'

neetukushq 'my sister'
numuhsees 'my older sister'

neetahty 'my sibling'

neehsumus 'my younger sibling'

24.917 ConLangs: How to Construct a Language Fall 2018