Identifying linguistic hypotheses & engineering artifacts in the Grammar Matrix

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Definitions

- Linguistic hypothesis

  - Cross-linguistic (general, phenomenon-specific, phenomenon-interaction)

  - Language-specific

- Expression of a linguistic hypothesis

- Engineering artifact (systematic, thoughtful, deliberate)

- Engineering artifact (stop-gap)

A sampling of hypotheses
(Slide from Ling 567)

- Words and phrases combine to make larger phrases.

- The semantics of a phrase is determined by the words in the phrase and how they are put together.

- Some rules for phrases add semantics (but some don't).

- Most phrases have an identifiable head daughter.

- Heads determine which arguments they require and how they combine semantically with those arguments.

- Modifiers determine which kinds of heads they can modify, and how they combine semantically with those heads.

- No lexical or syntactic rule can remove semantic information.

Murkiness

- Expression of linguistic hypotheses can be shaped by engineering decisions

  - Nominalization/gerunds expressed as lexical rule rather than mixed category

  - SLASH list of max length 1 (deprecated)

- Engineering decisions can overtime come to be seen as linguistic hypotheses

  - Binary-branching approach to head-comp (maybe; perhaps revisionist)

Suggested topics/activities

- Produce definitions of concepts on first slide

- Brainstorm examples of linguistic hypotheses & engineering choices (and murky cases)

- Advice on how to approach the Grammar Matrix code base to look at this in a data-driven way