

# Linguistic Cartography: Mapping Linguistic Theory

Sunny Ananthanarayan<sup>1</sup>, Eri Kashima<sup>2</sup>, Siva Kalyan<sup>2</sup>, Naomi Peck<sup>3</sup>

University of Texas at Austin<sup>1</sup>, Australian National University<sup>2</sup>, Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz<sup>3</sup>

## The Problem

Scientists work from models acquired through education and through subsequent exposure to the literature often without quite knowing or needing to know what characteristics have given these models the status of community paradigms – Kuhn (2012, p. 46)

- We often either picture the progression of ideas as a series of stable, cause-effect relationships; however, in reality it is a thick soup full of connections in every direction
- There is value in finding out the nature of each nexus—we get a certain depth of understanding from learning the history of our science
- This has been done to some extent, but it is not often shared with students coming up in the field

## Works and groups addressing the issue

- *The Linguistics Wars* by Randy Allen Harris (1993)
- *Ideology and Linguistic Theory: Noam Chomsky and the Deep Structure Debates* by John Goldsmith and Geoffrey Huck (1996)
- *Linguistic theory in America: The first quarter-century of transformational generative grammar* by Frederick Newmeyer (1980)
- *Verfolgung und Auswanderung deutschsprachiger Sprachforscher 1933-1945* by Utz Maas (2010)
- *The Henry Sweet Society*, Society for the History of Linguistic Ideas (<http://www.henrysweet.org/>)
- *Historiographia Linguistica*, International Journal for the History of the Language Sciences
- *Sociedad Española de Historiografía Lingüística*, The Spanish Society of Linguistic Historiography (<http://www.sehl.es/>)

We may, to be more precise, have to relinquish the notion, explicit or implicit, that changes of paradigm carry scientists and those who learn from them closer and closer to the truth

– Kuhn (2012, p. 170)

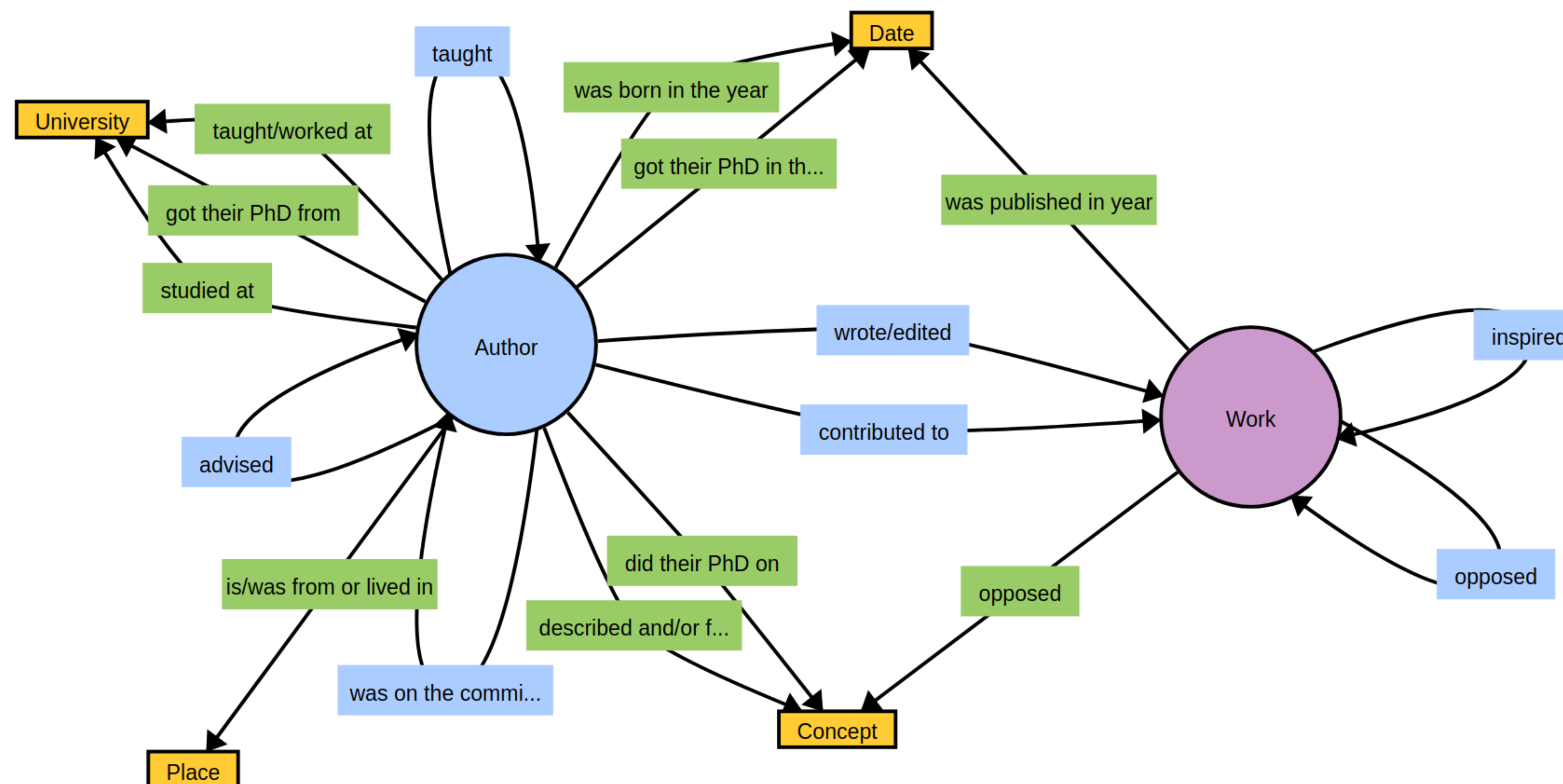


Figure 1: The present ontology

## Data storage strategy

- RDF (Resource Description Framework) triples are sets of three URLs that give information in the form (Domain, Relationship/Predicate, Range)
- We harnessed the power of this to give us a database of relationships between authors and works, along with years, locations, concepts, and universities

## Working definitions

- Inspired: One work was cited in the other
- Opposed: *Author* explicitly mentions that their work differs from another work
- Described: Wrote at least one work on a subejct
- Contributed to: Wrote a piece that constituted part of a volume
- Wrote/edited: Edited a volume or wrote an article/book
- Studied at: did undergraduate or a postdoc at this university
- Taught/worked at: was any kind of lecturer, researcher

## Future steps

- Collaboration with Linguist Tree (not to be confused with LinguisTree)
  - Integration of interviews and transcripts on author pages
  - Updating dataset with information scraped from transcripts
- Launching our own domain for wider reach and so that users at home can contribute without using GitHub
- Including a feature for users to edit existing nodes and relationships
- Implementing a filter tool too look at nodes that pertain to particular subjects, time periods, and geographical spaces
- Building a MySQL or SQL backend that uses the RDF Schema

## References

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## Contact Information

Sunny Ananthanarayan: [sunny.a@utexas.edu](mailto:sunny.a@utexas.edu)  
Eri Kashima: [eri.kashima@anu.edu.au](mailto:eri.kashima@anu.edu.au)  
Siva Kalyan: [sivakalyan.princeton@gmail.com](mailto:sivakalyan.princeton@gmail.com)  
Naomi Peck: [naomi.peck.np@gmail.com](mailto:naomi.peck.np@gmail.com)

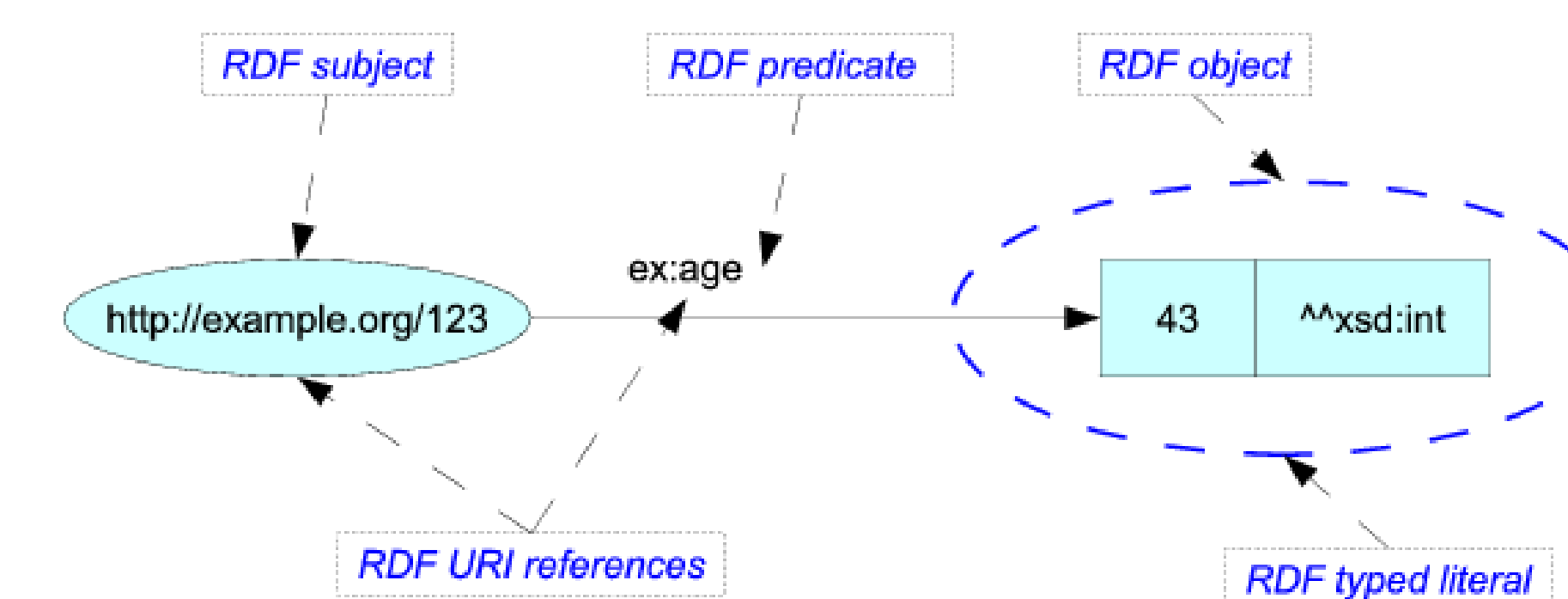


Figure 2: How RDF stores data  
<http://dublincore.org/documents/dc-rdf/>