1 ▢ **Unit 3**
  Language and Society

2 ▢ **Human language**
- With language getting to the core of IC
- A way to get <u>inside</u> a culture
- Language: uniquely human?
- Other animals: chimps, dolphins?
  – Depends on how we define language
  – Sounds associated with meanings
  – No ability to express abstract thoughts

3 ▢ **Language and Culture**
- Language use: not something we think about
- US Americans less so than others
- Because most Americans are monolingual, they tend to assume that…
  – Difference between languages: different words
  – Understanding other languages: a matter of exchanging words
  – Ignores differences in language structure
  – Ignores differences in culture, intimately linked to language

4 ▢ **Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis**
- An aspect of connection between language & culture
- In some ways opposite of "universal grammar"
- "Human beings do not live in the objective world alone…but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society." ~ Sapir
- Principle 1: linguistic determinism
- Principle 2: linguistic relativity

5 ▢ **How can language be analyzed?**
- "The dog is biting the man."

- English, one of over 6000 languages; is it typical?
- Written vs. spoken: about 200 languages written
- Uses Latin alphabet, other writing systems
  - 狗咬人 [Mandarin Chinese, Pinyin: Gǒu yǎo rén]
- Linguistic analysis:
  - Phonetics/phonology – the sounds of language
    - IPA: | ðə dɔg ɪz baɪtɪŋ ðə mæn | (International Phonetic Alphabet)
  - Semantics - what it means
  - Syntax – how the sentence is put together
    - German: "Den Mann beißt der Hund."
  - Morphology – endings show how words are being used

6 🔲 **Linguistics: Systematic study of language**

- Sociolinguistics
  - Study of how language is used in society, variations among cultures, age groups, genders, social class, etc.
- Field linguistics
  - Data collection on little-studied languages
- Applied linguistics
  - Language acquisition
  - Language learning and technology
- Computational linguistics
  - Study of technology & language, include automatic speech recognition, natural language processing, computer-assisted translation, etc.

7 🔲 **Modern linguistics: How languages work**

8 🔲 **Descriptive Linguistics: Rule Systems**

- Languages have rules
- Those rules can be identified & described [not prescribed!]
- Different aspects of language => different rule systems…
  - Phonetics/Phonology
  - Morphology

– Syntax
– Semantics
– Pragmatics

9 🔲 **Phonology**

The rules of language for combining phonemes (basic units of sound)

- The phonological rules of language tell speakers which sounds to use and how to order them
- Languages have different number of phonemes (English has 45 phonemes)
- Mastery of another language requires practice in reproducing its sounds accurately

10 🔲 **Morphology**

The rules of language for combining phonemes to form morphemes, which are the smallest units of meaning

- The 45 English phonemes can be used to generate more than 50 million morphemes

- Example: Comfort
             Comfort-ed
             Un-comfort-able

11 🔲 **Syntax**

Study of the relationship of the words to one another

- Each language stipulates the correct way to arrange words
- Each language has a set of rules that govern the sequence of the words

  Example:
   John has gone to the store to buy some eggs   (English syntax)
   John has, to the store gone, some eggs to buy. (German syntax)

To the store John has gone to buy some eggs.   (Russian syntax)

12 🔲 **Semantics**

The study of meanings of words

- Words themselves do not have holistic meanings. People within a cultural community establish shared meanings for specific words and phrases.
- Some important areas of semantic theory or related subjects include these:

13 🔲 **Pragmatics**

- The study of how language is actually used and the effect that language has on human perceptions and behaviors
- Pragmatics concerns the cultural expectations of how, when, where, with whom, and under what situational conditions certain verbal expressions are preferred, prohibited, or prescribed.
- Example:
  "It's cold!"
  "Nuts!"
  (Battle of the Bulge)

14 🔲 **Language classification systems**

- Typological classification system organizes languages according to the similarities and differences in their structures
  – For example word-order based versus inflection based
- Genetic classification system divides languages into families on the basis of their historical development
  – Language families

15 🔲 **The distribution of the world languages**

- 2,200 languages in Asia

- 2,060 languages in Africa

- 1,300 languages in the Pacific

- 1,000 languages in the Americas

- 230 languages in Europe

16 ◻ **Countries with the greatest number of languages?**
[1] Papua-New Guinea   832
Indonesia   731
Nigeria   515
India   400
Mexico   295
Cameroon   286
Australia   268
Brazil   234
[2]

   Half of the world's languages are spoken in only eight countries

17 ◻ **Top 15 languages**

18 ◻ **The Indo-European Family**

19 ◻ **Endangered Languages**
- Biodiversity vital to human survival
- How about cultural diversity?
- Cultural knowledge bound to language
- Nearly half of world's languages threatened

20 ◻ **Endangered Languages**
- What we lose
  - Ancient cultures with spoken traditions & stories

- Knowledge of the natural world
- Impact of globalization?
  - Role of English
  - Role of social media
- How could technology help?
  - Compile grammars, dictionaries
  - Recordings of speakers; on-line learning materials

21 ▢ Revived Languages

- Hebrew
  - Extinct as a spoken language for 2 millenia
- Cornish, Manx
  - Close to extinction
- Hawaiian
  - Continuously spoken on one island
- Artificial Languages
  - Esperanto

22 ▢ Alternative versions of a language

- Dialects – versions of a language with distinctive vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation that are spoken by particular groups of people
- Accents – distinguishable marks of pronunciation
- Jargon – a set of words/terms that are shared by those with a common profession or experience
- Pidgin– a simplified language that develops as a means of communication between two or more groups that do not have a language in common
- Creole– full-fledged language that originated from a pidgin or combination of other languages, often originated in plantations
- Code switching – the selection of the language to be used in a particular interaction by multilingual individuals

- Lingua franca – common language used by speakers of different languages
- Register – is a variety of a language used for a particular purpose or in a particular social setting

23 🔲 **Language Learning: What it takes**

- How old can you be?
- Where to start?
  - Japanese: learn characters first?
- How much does grammar matter?
  - Depends on language
  - Heavily inflected languages
- Overlap
  - Learning a first FL helps with learning others
  - Language skills – transferability
- How to measure language ability
  - European Framework, ACTFL standards
  - Standardized exams

24 🔲 **The English Language**
- English has a wider dispersion than any other language.
- Countries using English as a 1st or 2nd language are located on all five continents, and the total population of these countries amounts to close to half of the world's population.
- English is the official or national language of 52 countries.