11-823 Conlanging

Narrative
Pear Story

- What is the teller viewpoint
- Who is the audience
- What is the point of the story
- What is the structure
5-7-5 “syllables” (on)

- 初しぐれ猿も小蓑をほしげ也
- はつしぐれさるもこみのをほしげな
- *hatsu shigure saru mo komino wo hoshige nari*
- The first cold shower
- *Even the monkey seems to want*
- *A little coat of straw*
Follow the rules ...

- Writing a haiku
  *Is simple just stop at the seventeenth sylab*
Follow the rules ...

- Writing a haiku
  Is simple just stop at the seventeenth sylab

- Meta-haiku
  Seasonal reference
  Personal experience
  Poignant reflexion
Writing a Limerick's absurd,
Line one and line five rhyme in word,
And just as you've reckoned
They rhyme with the second;
The fourth line must rhyme with the third.

There was a young man of Japan
Whose limericks never would scan.
When asked why this was,
He replied "It's because
I always try to fit as many syllables into the last line as ever I possibly can."
There was a young man from Peru
Whose limericks all stopped at line two
Limericks (breaking the rules)

- There was a young man from Peru
  Whose limericks all stopped at line two

- There was an old maid from Verdun
Limericks (breaking the rules)

- There was a young man from Peru
  Whose limericks all stopped at line two

- There was an old maid from Verdun

- And one about Emperor Nero, but I can never generate even the first line
Narrative Structure (High Level)

- Plot, theme, resolution
- Setup, conflict, resolution

- Many stories actually follow the same structure
Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone.
Star Wars: A New Hope; synopsis

Harry Potter
Luke Skywalker is an orphan living with his uncle and aunt on the remote wilderness of Tatooine: muggles, suburbia, Hagrid.

He is rescued from aliens by wise, bearded Ben Kenobi, who turns out to be a Jedi-Knight: Hagrid, Harry, Harry, wizard, Harry.

Ben reveals to Luke that Luke's father was also a Jedi-Knight, and was the best pilot he had ever seen:

Harry, Quidditch player, a magic wand, Luke.

Luke is also instructed in how to use the Jedi-light-sabre as he too trains to become a Jedi:

Harry, wizard, Hogwarts.

Luke has many adventures in the galaxy and makes new friends such as Han Solo and Princess Leia: Ron, Hermione.

In the course of these adventures he distinguishes himself as a top X-wing pilot in the battle of the Death Star, making the direct hit that secures the Rebels victory against the forces of evil:

Harry, Griffindor, Lord Voldemort, Slytherin.

Luke also sees off the threat of Darth Vader, who we know murdered his uncle and aunt:

Parents

In the finale, Luke and his new friends receive medals of valour:

Harry, win the House Cup.

All of this will be set to an orchestral score composed by John Williams.
Three Acts ...

- **Act One: Setup**
  - Introducing the characters
  - 4 Privet Drive

- **Act Two: Conflict**
  - Inciting incident
  - Someone dies, something won/lost
  - “Harry you're a wizard”

- **Act Three: Resolution**
  - “At last we meet”
  - (the final car chase)
Narrative (low level)

- Introducing character
  - *Definite/indefinite (name or occupation)*

- Foreground/background
  - “one summer's day”

- “Chekhov's gun”
  - “Every element should be necessary and irreplaceable”

- (Don't read tvtropes.com you'll never escape)
Narrative Style

- Couplets
- Long/short sentences
- Quoted speech/narration
- Rhyming
Orality

- Alliteration
- Rhymes and meter
- Repetition
- Active voice
- Multiple adjectives
- Long/short sentences
Metonyms

- The lamb stands for spring
- The oak stands for age/wisdom
- The river stands for time
- Maybe (sometimes a cigar is just a cigar)
Cultural Metonyms

- **Colors**
  - Black (death) or white (death)

- **Technology**
  - Sailing: ship shape
  - Masonary: all square
  - Internet: but I 404'd that

- **Animals**
  - Magpie, Unicorn, Dragon, Snake, Fox
Fables

- Animals (with human capabilities)
- Ending moral
- Timeless/cross cultural
- (well sometimes)
The Boy Hunting Locusts

A BOY was hunting for locusts. He had caught a goodly number, when he saw a Scorpion, and mistaking him for a locust, reached out his hand to take him. The Scorpion, showing his sting, said: If you had but touched me, my friend, you would have lost me, and all your locusts too!
Narrative Homework

- Produce Narrative in your language
- Text (speech not necessary)
- Interlinear gloss
- Translation
- Explanation when appropriate
- Show off your complex morpho-syntax

Submit Friday noon 9th May to awb and isl
Acting it out

- Conlanging isn't just about constructing
- It's about using the language too.
- It (most often) is used in SF/Fantasy/Movies
- It reflects a culture
- It reflects some dramatic purpose
- Has to be defined
- Has to be taught
- Has to be acted out
(mis)Interpreting Alien Language in movies
For next week ... 

- Select an existing movie scene
- Write the dialog in your language
- Select a partner(s) (can include awb/lsl)
- Teach them to carry it out
- Present it in class (Tuesday or Thursday)
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- Get you to spread your language
- Care about how to frame it for others
- (Can get class to take part too in addition to 2 speakers)