*Linguistic Science
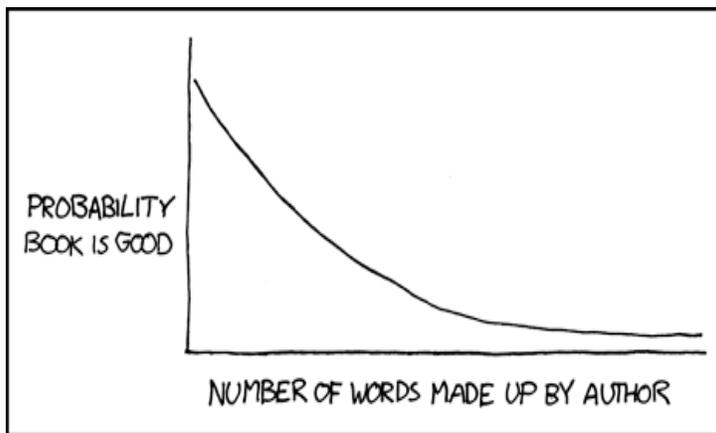and
Science Fiction*

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http://www.umich.edu/~jlawler/valhallaconpanel.pdf

VallhallaCon '09

Language in Science Fiction

http://xkcd.com/483

"THE ELDERS, OR *FRAÁS*, GUARDED THE *FARMLINGS* (CHILDREN) WITH THEIR *KRYTOSES*, WHICH ARE LIKE SWORDS BUT *AWESOMER*..."

The Language Construction Kit

http://www.zompist.com/kit.html

This set of webpages (what's a set of webpages? a webchapter?) is intended for anyone who wants to create artificial languages-- for a fantasy or an alien world, as a hobby, as an interlanguage. It presents linguistically sound methods for creating naturalistic languages-- which can be reversed to create non-naturalistic languages. It suggests further reading for those who want to know more, and shortcuts for those who want to know less.
--Mark Rosenfelder

http://www.wired.com/geekdad/2009/08/top-ten-geekiest-constructe-languages

The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language, *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language* (Both by David Crystal, each 1-vol pb. Contain everything one needs to know about the subjects.)

Blogs: *Tenser, said the Tensor*, *Language Hat*, *Arnold Zwicky*, *Language Log*

The LINGUIST List and the Ethnologue are the best general online linguistic resources to start with

Linguistics in Science Fiction

Suzette Haden Elgin: Linguist and SF writer (*Native Tongue*, Ozark trilogy, Coyote Jones series) Publishes a newsletter about Linguistics in/and SF. Check out "We Have Always Spoken Panglish".

Lists of Science Fiction Books which feature linguistics or linguists

- a list from LINGUIST
- a list from Maggie Browning, at Princeton
- syllabus from a Linguistics and Science Fiction course at the University of Florida

Some human language phenomena (and I'm not even mentioning Metaphor!)

Lushootseed (Skagit dialect):

t'q-t'q-ʔác 'Vine maple (*Acer circinatum*)'
Root **t'əq** '(to) split, separate'   Suffix **-ʔác** 'tree or bush'
CVC- root reduplication: Augmentative/Plural 'all split up' (cf **č'ƛ'á č'ƛ'a** 'rocks' < **č'ƛ'a** 'rock')
 'The all-split-up tree'

ju-jub-ʔalikʷ-ʔác 'Pine tree' (*Pinus* spp)
Root **jub** '(to) kick' + Suffix **-ʔalikʷ** 'act in a conventional fashion'
    = **jubʔalikʷ** '(to) dance'   (cf **pədʔalikʷ** '(to) farm' < root **pəd** '(to) plant')
CV- root reduplication: Diminutive/Attentuated 'dance a little bit'
 'The dance-a-little-bit tree'

qájət-əb 'be (a) Skagit (person)'   **qájət-əb-čəɬ** 'We are Skagit(s)'
duhóbəš-əb 'be (a) Snohomish (person)' **duhóbəš-əb-čəxʷ** 'You are Snohomish'
q-qájət-əb 'speak Skagit'   **q-qájət-əb-čələp** 'You folks speak Skagit'
d-duhóbəš-əb 'speak Snohomish'   **d-duhóbəš-əb-tiʔiɬ** 'He speaks Snohomish'
 C- root reduplication: [applies to group name only] 'speak (like a) _____'

gʷat 'be who?' **gʷat-čəxʷ** 'Who are you?'
ʔəxíd 'be how?' **ʔəs-ʔəxíd-ciʔiɬ**   'How is she?'
 Prefix **ʔəs-** 'temporary condition'

Malay (Bahasa Indonesia, Bahasa Malaysia, Bahasa Melayu):

benar 'correct'   **kental** 'thick (of liquid)'   **betul** 'true'
ke-benar-an 'correctness' **ke-kental-an** 'coagulation'   **ke-betul-an** 'by coincidence'
hati 'liver' **ke-hati-hati-an** 'care, caution'   **mem-per-hati-kan** 'to pay attention to'
bilang '[1] to say; [2] every' **Apa dia bilang**? 'What did he say?' **bilang hari** 'every day'
matahari '(the) sun' [lit 'eye of day']   **orang utan** 'orangutang' [lit 'jungle person']

Ergativity (found widely in Basque, Caucasian, and Australian languages, among others)

In this system of grammatical relation marking, the "object" of a **transitive** sentence
(e.g, *They saw him*) and the "subject" of an **intransitive** sentence (e.g, *He sat there*)
are both marked the same way, in the Absolutive case, while the "subject" of a transitive
sentence gets marked differently, in the Ergative case. Sometimes pronouns are marked as
in English, but all nouns are marked with an Ergative system.
English has a little of this in some compounds; everybody knows that *employer* and *employee*
are complementary, but what about the *–ee* suffix in *transportee, parolee,* and *escapee*, for
example? These are all Absolutive nouns, either subjects of intransitive verbs like *escape*,
or objects of transitive verbs like *transport* or *parole* with indefinite subjects. But most
European languages use a different system (the Accusative system) which marks subjects
and objects differently no matter what verb they're used with.

Noun Classes (often called "Gender", this is really a categorization system for nouns, and concepts)

English has no noun gender, Spanish and French have two genders, German and Latin three,
Swedish a different three, and Polish four. Bantu languages, however, typically have ten to
twenty noun classes, sorted not by sex but by meaning category. Examples from Swahili:
Trees: [sg] **m-limau**, [pl] **mi-limau** 'lemon tree'; **m-ti, mi-ti** 'tree'; **m-witu, mi-itu** 'forest'
Fruit: **limau**, **ma-limau** 'lemon'; **pera**, **ma-pera** 'guava' People: **m-tu**, **wa-tu** 'person';
m-zee, **wa-zee** 'old person'; **m-toto**, **wa-toto** 'child'; **m-wana**, **wa-ana** 'son/daughter'
Abstractions: ukubwa 'size', umoja 'unity', uzee 'old age'; <Insert Name Here>: **ki-ti, vi-ti** 'branch';
ki-tabu, vi-tabu 'book'; **ki-toto, vi-toto** 'infant'; **ki-su, vi-su** 'knife'; **ki-kapu, vi-kapu** 'basket'