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### Piecing the Parts Together: The Human Body

I chose to do my visual based on the human body because like language, it is a very complex system that comes together to make us functional. I originally visualized it as primarily syntax because that was what I drew as “illustrator” earlier in the class when we were studying syntax. As we learned more about language and I was able to connect the other parts, I realized it was a good way to go about this project as well.

Starting with the arms and legs, I gave each a category. The left leg is semantics, the right leg is syntax, the left arm is morphology, and the right arm is phonetics. I put them in these spots because they each are crucial to the normal function of language, as arms and legs are to normal human function, though they are not directly connected to one another. I then looked at the hands and feet, and for each category, I gave one to give a simple break down of the important aspects of each category.

For morphology, the left arm/hand, I listed the common ways of creating words on each finger: combining, shortening, blending, shifting, and reduplication. I did it this way because the definition of morphology, according to the textbook, is the study of word structure. Though the chapter is not all about creating new words, I felt that the definition could apply to these methods because the roots of each word in the English language were combined, shortened, blended,

shifted, and reduplicated into the words they are now. They were all new words once, just as we were all babies once.

For phonetics, the right arm/hand, I looked at the basic components of phonology: vowels, spelling, allophones, consonants, and the International Phonetic Alphabet. Phonetics is the study of speech sounds, how they are produced, and how they are perceived, according to the textbook. I chose to use these categories because they are the very basic components of a word, and though they do not mean very much on paper, they count for everything coming out of the mouth.

For Semantics, the left leg/foot, I based it off the “nyms”: hyponymy, meronymy, synonymy, antonymy, and homonymy. I chose to list these because the definition in the textbook of semantics is the study of meaning in language. The “nyms” are ways of categorization by meaning.

For syntax, the right leg/foot, I listed the basic components of syntax: open class lexical categories, closed class lexical categories, phrases, clauses, and sentences. I chose to list these because I feel they are the most commonly known parts of grammar. I wanted to give my toes their own toes so that I could expand on categories within each one, but it wasn't the point.

After I decided where morphology, phonetics, syntax, and semantics fit in, I looked at discourse. The way I understood it, discourse is the spoken, or conversational, language that results from the previous four categories. I decided to put that as the core of the body because it ties all four previously mentioned categories together to give the language its meaning. We need our arms and legs to function, but without the core—spine, heart, lungs, blood, ribs, etc.—the body itself would not survive.

Style was a tricky one for me. I decided it best fit as the brain because the style of our language not only connects all five previously mentioned categories together, but it also determines the attitude of our language and the perception of it. The way we think gives us our personality, which gives the people around us a way to perceive us. The style of our writing gives a teacher an insight into how we think as linguists, historians, mathematicians, or whatever else we profess in. It can give a friend an insight into how we felt when writing that letter, or at the least, how we wanted them to think we felt. The style of our speech often decides the tone of our speech as well. If we are speaking with an extensive vocabulary, there's a good chance we are aiming to sound intelligent. If we are speaking in slang, we are probably feeling very casual and relaxed. If we are speaking in parentese, we are probably feeling very proud to have our son or daughter and excited to see their progressions as humans. Style means everything.