LINGUISTICS 105:
Morphology

September 28, 2012:
Introduction to {the course, morphology}

Course Staff

Instructor:

Matt Tucker

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240 Stevenson

Office Hours:

Mondays

10:00am – Noon

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On The Index Card...

1. Name

2. Major

3. College/Year

4. Any languages you speak natively or fluently.

5. Any languages you've studied formerly not listed in (4).

6. An interesting **non**-linguistic fact about you.

Sections

Section #	Time	Place
01A	Tuesday 8:30--9:30 am	Cowell College #223
02B	Tuesday 12:00--1:00pm	Cowell College #223

- Sections are mandatory (participation matters).
- New material will occasionally come up at section.
- There *will* be section next week!

Course Website

http://people.ucsc.edu/
~matucker/courses/ling105f12

- Homeworks & syllabus/schedule will be updated online.

- Readings are password protected:

  username: ling105

  password: w0rds

- Grades on eCommons

  https://ecommons.ucsc.edu/
  xsl-portal

Morphology Reading Group

Jorge Hankamer

Anie Thompson

- Reading group of faculty, grads, and undergraduates.
- Reads research papers on morphology and morphosyntax (sometimes morphophonology)

- Often, we provide prepublication comments to authors of new papers.
- Meetings TBA this quarter (probably a weeknight).
- Organizational meeting this **Tuesday at 9am in the LCR (Stevenson 249).**
- See me at any point in the quarter if you are interested.

Introduction to Morphology

The Science of Words

What is Morphology?

- MORPHOLOGY =$_{def}$ The study of the structure, form, and meaning of words.

- Not particular to any given language – we are looking as these topics as cognitive scientists.

- Not always viewed as a distinct subfield...

- Has many different instantiations:

  - Morphosyntax

  - Morphophonology

  - Morphosemantics

  - Experimental morphology

- This class is primarily about **morphosyntax**.

Morphological Questions

- **Basic question**: what kind of knowledge to speakers have when we say they *know* a word?
  - If they have never heard it, how do they interpret its meaning?

    sugar-ize   sugarization   sugarizer

  - What does it mean to "know" that a word is made up of parts?   illegible   illiberal

    /il-/+/-legible/   /il-/+/-liberal/?   (Hay, 2003)
  - How does word structure interface with word order?

    Julian likes **him**.   **He** likes Ricky.
- What about the creation of novel words from known parts of other words?   synonym~antonym

  retronym backronym aptronym

In This Class

- We will be concerned with morphology in its relation to syntax.
  - Accordingly, we will often ask how words change their form in context.
  - But we will also ask how word form influences syntax.
  - We could teach an entire second course on morphophonology.
    - Take PHONO II if you are interested.
- Goals:
  1. A list of the relevant parts of sentences which must be memorized (a LEXICON).
  2. A system for combining those parts into sentences (a SYNTAX).
  3. A means to map that syntax onto pronounceable strings (a MORPHOLOGY).

What **is** a word?

- TAKE HOME MESSAGE: while easy to intuit, this is a difficult notion to define *formally*.
  - Phonology? (i.e., "domain bounded by a pause")

    couldn't   baby-sit   pick up-able

  - Syntax? (i.e., "a terminal node")

    -ed   baby-sit   floorboard

  - Semantics? (i.e., "a single unit of meaning")

    see-s   oust-ed

- Moreover, we'd *miss a generalization*:

  see   see-s   saw   seen

- IN SUM: Despite being the science of words, morphologists don't worry about words that often.

# A Brief History of Morphology

From Panini to Embick

In the Beginning...

- Ancient grammarians (Panini, Sibawayhi, *etc*.): very concerned with which forms take which endings.

- Or historical reconstruction (Bopp, Grimm, etc.): similar conjugations found in Sanskrit, Latin, Greek...

  - This is a diachronic approach to morphology: studies are used to look at language as it changes.

- Issues:

  1. Focused on very few languages (usually Indo-European).

  2. Purely descriptive insofar as it does not attempt to explain speaker knowledge.

American Structuralism

- School of thought based in America, heavily influenced by Ferdinand de Saussure's *Course in General Linguistics* (1916).
- Basic thesis: language is an unchanging system of interconnected units.
- Much work done on phonology and morphology in this field.
  - Phonemes exist because they stand in opposition to each other – without /pæt/, /kæt/ has no meaning, and so forth.
- Criticisms:
  - Chomsky: syntax is infinite, so as a theory of *language,* it is not sufficient.
  - Even morphology is possibly infinite:
    Meowing and petting himself for hours, John *catted* around the place. (Marantz, 1997)
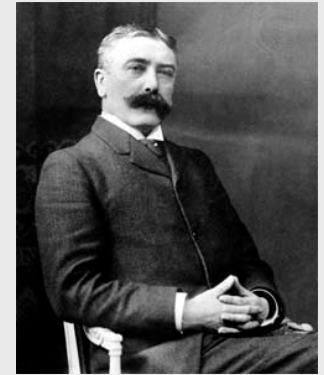
Ferdinand de Saussure

Benjamin Whorf

Enter Chomsky

- Chomsky criticized American Structuralism, and out of his criticism generative linguistics was born.

- Central problem: how is linguistic knowledge to be represented, and how is it learned?

- A system of explicit, formal rules which attempt to *explain*, rather than simply describe.

- Grammar is:
  - MODULAR: it is made up of different subsystems (phonology, morphology, syntax, etc.)
  - About COMPETENCE (knowledge), not PERFORMANCE (usage).
  - A UNIVERSAL system with language-particular settings (sometimes called parameters).

Noam Chomsky

Trends in Generative Morphology

- Transformational Grammar (1960's, 1970's): transformations insert morphology where necessary.
- Government and Binding (1980's): morphology can be in syntax and is part of the syntactic computation.
- Early Minimalism (early 1990's): Morphology is *lexical*: words are inserted into syntax as pronounced, and syntax is driven by morphological needs.
- Late Minimalism (Late 1990's – present): Morphology is *distributed* and inserted at the end of syntax.

Alec Marantz

Mark Aronoff

David Embick

Some Basics

Morphemes, Interlinear Glossing, and the basics of morphology

The Morpheme

- Because words are so difficult to define, we will work with a different atomic element in this course:
- MORPHEME $=_{def}$ the smallest unit of indivisible sound and meaning in a given language.
- Examples of English morphemes:

  /-ɪd/   /-z, -ɪz, -s/   /-ø/   /dɔg/

- Non-examples of morphemes:

  /spaɪz/   /-ɑsɪti/   /-kʊdn̩t/

- Practice: how many morphemes?

  wooden   boyishness   antidisestablishmentarianism

Interlinear Glossing

Schema:

Source data in IPA
Morpheme-by-morpheme gloss
"Translation"

(1) θɪs ɪz æn ɪŋglɪʃ glɔs-t sɛntɪnz.
    this is an English gloss-PAST sentence

"This is an English glossed sentence."

Interlinear Glossing, II

(2) noʊ me gusta naða la ɛspɪnaka.
     NEG 1.SG.DAT like.3.SG nothing the.FEM spinach

"I don't like spinach at all."

(3) al-muħaabaraat yɪ-hraq-uun baantˤaaluun=ii
     the-secret.police 3.SG-burn.PRES-PL pants=1.SG.POSS

"The secret police are burning my pants."

For Monday

- Read *Language Files*, ch. 4.

- No homework (yet; HW 1 is posted, though).

- Start thinking about a language you might be interested in other than English or your native language.