What is morphology and why should it be?

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BBNAN-14300, Elective lecture in linguistics
Mon 10:15–11:45, rm 126

Practical points about the course

- web site with syllabus and recommended readings, ppt's uploaded (under my personal page, consulting hours, e-mail)
- no compulsory reading
- written exam at end of term (a few paragraphs to write on two or three questions) based on topics covered in lectures
- optional mock exam on last week (9th May)

What is this course about?

- Morphology — what is it?
- The study of the internal structure of words, their properties and (some of) their relations

→ how do we know that words have structure?

What is inside words?

- Recurrent pairs of form and meaning:

happy ~ happily	*lock ~ unlock*
angry ~ angrily	*tie ~ untie*
sad ~ sadly	*cover ~ uncover*
quick ~ quickly	*do ~ undo*

→ there is something about *-ly* and *un-*
→ the words on the right consist of two parts

What is inside words?

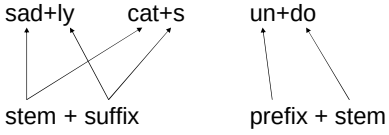
- The behaviour of words in sentences:

The cat is here ~ The cats are here
**The cat are here ~ *The cats is here*
**The mouse are here* → [s] is not enough
The people are here → [s] is not necessary

→ There is something common to *cat & mouse*, and to *cats & people*
SINGULAR vs. PLURAL: is it a property or a part of the words?

What is inside words?

Recurrent form–meaning pairs and the behaviour of words in sentences show that words are structured, e.g.



What is inside words?

So far so good, but things aren't so simple:

the happy man	↔	*he walked happily*
the angry man	↔	*he spoke angrily*
the fast man	↔	*he walked fast (*fastly)!*
the sheep is here	↔	*the sheep are here*

Can these words be analysed into parts? How?

What is inside words?

want ~ wanted
look ~ looked
carry ~ carried
play ~ played

stem + suffix

sing ~ sang
take ~ took
cut ~ cut

???

Clarifying basic notions: word

The cook was a good cook as cooks go.

How many words are there in this sentence?
→ orthographic word (bounded by space) or word form

$cook_1 \neq cook_2 \neq cooks$

But these represent the same unit (in some sense) → COOK (noun), it has two forms (*cook* singular, *cooks* plural)

Clarifying basic notions: word

The cook was a good cook as cooks go.

How many words are there in this sentence?
→ lexeme (unit of language)

$cook_1 = cook_2 = cooks$

Lexemes are realised by different grammatical forms (singular, plural, present, past, cases...)

Clarifying basic notions: word

The cook was a good cook as cooks go.

How many words are there in this sentence?
→ grammatical word

$cook_1 = cook_2 \neq cooks$

Grammatical words are *actual* words, unlike lexemes, which are abstract.

Clarifying basic notions: word

More on grammatical words:

John <u>walked</u> home ~ John has <u>walked</u> home.

$walked_1 \neq walked_2$, cf.

John <u>went</u> home ~ John has <u>gone</u> home.

$walked_1 \neq walked_2$ two different grammatical words!

Clarifying basic notions: word

Yet another related term:

Joe kicked the bucket 'Joe died'

kick the bucket is three lexemes (and also three word forms), but it is one unit of meaning (idiom), so it needs to be listed in the lexicon (and in dictionaries)

→ lexical item (=lexemes + idioms, set phrases)

Clarifying basic notions: word

Finally:

Joe's gone; I've seen him.

Phonological word: a unit that may be one or several word forms, lexemes, but which behaves phonologically as one word (stress, vowel harmony...)

Clarifying basic notions: word

word form (orthographic word)**:** units following each other in speech or writing

lexeme: an abstract unit of meaning and form(s), dictionary word, realised by word forms

grammatical word: grammatically different forms of a lexeme

lexical item: lexemes and other (bigger) units of meaning: idioms, set phrases (non-compositional)

phonological word: a word-sized phonological unit

Clarifying basic notions: parts of words

Every-one live-s by sell-ing some-thing.

The chunks that make up word forms are called **morphs.**

Words may consist of one or several morphs.

Free morphs: *every, one, live, sell, some, thing*

Bound morphs: *s, ing*

Clarifying basic notions: parts of words

Morphs realise **morphemes**, just like speech sounds realise phonemes.

Morphemes are abstract units of form and meaning, realised by morphs.

a parrot ~ *an elephant*

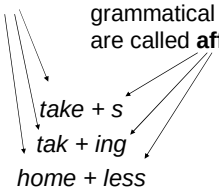
Two morphs with the same meaning in complementary distribution realise one morpheme

→ **allomorphs**

Clarifying basic notions: parts of words

Morphemes that represent lexemes are called **stems** or **roots**.

Morphemes that represent other things (e.g. grammatical categories) are called **affixes**.



(But things are far not so simple, as you will see.)

Exercise

Now look at the Czech data →

The basics of morphology

- How does morphology work?
  - morphological processes/operations
- What does morphology do?
  - the functions of morphology

How does morphology work?

Affixation: morphs next to each other

- **suffixation**: *friend+ly, friend+li+ness, take+s, lát+ta+m, ház+unk+ban*
- **prefixation**: *un+do, dis+regard, leg+jobb*, Czech *nej+lepší* 'best' (from *lepší* 'better')
- **infixation**: Latin *ru-m-p-* 'break' from *rup-*, Greek *tynkh(ano)* 'happen to be' from *tykh-* 'chance'; Tagalog *sulat* 'write' → *s-um-ulat* 'wrote', *s-in-ulat* 'was written'

How does morphology work?

Fusion: Morphs not separable, merge into each other

saw = *see* + PAST
took = *take* + PAST
feet = *foot* + PLURAL
belief ~ believe (NOUN ~ VERB)
bath ~ bathe (NOUN ~ VERB)
'insult ~ in'sult (NOUN ~ VERB)
'record ~ re'cord (NOUN ~ VERB)

How does morphology work?

Reduplication: part of a stem repeated

Latin *mord(eo)* 'I bite' → *momord(i)* 'I bit'
tund(o) 'I push' → *tutud(i)* 'I pushed'
Motu (PNG) *tau* 'man' → *tatau* 'men'
mero 'boy' → *memero* 'boys'
meromero 'little boy'
memeromemero 'little boys'

How does morphology work?

Truncation: part of a stem removed

Greek *grammat-* 'letter' → *gramma* SingNom
paid- 'child' → *pai* Vocative

French adjectives: masculine vs. feminine

[move] ~ [movez] 'bad'	(*mauvais, mauvaise*)
[ver] ~ [vert] 'green'	(*vert, verte*)
[lõ] ~ [lõg] 'long'	(*long, longue*)
[blã] ~ [blãʃ] 'white'	(*blanc, blanche*)
[grã] ~ [grãd] 'big'	(*grand, grande*)
[frwa] ~ [frwad] 'cold'	(*froid, froide*)

How does morphology work?

Truncation: part of a stem removed

Papago (Uto-Aztecan):

IMPF.SG.	PLUR.	PF.SG.	PF.PLUR.
him 'walk'	*hihim*	*hī*	*hihi*
hīnk 'bark'	*hihink*	*hīn*	*hihin*
hikck 'cut'	*hihikck*	*hikc*	*hihikc*
gatwid 'shoot'	*gagtwid*	*gatwi*	*gagtwi*
huksan 'scrape'	*huhuksan*	*huksa*	*huhuksa*

How does morphology work?

Compounding: combining two lexemes

endocentric	exocentric
horseriding	*egg-head*
typewrite	*turncoat*
sea-bird	
dish-washer	

How does morphology work?

Compounding: combining two lexemes

Hungarian:

levélírás, kézírás, gyorsírás ↔ **főnökírás, *titkárírás, *apaírás*

→ No subject in verb compounds (?)

But:

libagágogás, gyermeksírás ↔ **embermagyarázás, *gyermekfüllentés*

→ No **agentive** subject in verb compounds

How does morphology work?

Conversion: no change in form (also called zero derivation)

to cut ~ a cut
to meet ~ a meet (≠ *a meeting*)
fast (adj) ~ *fast* (adv)

How does morphology work?

Clitics: halfway between words and affixes

Hung: *látod-<u>e</u>, Péter-<u>e</u>*
Latin*: hae feminae canunt* 'these women sing'
→ *hae<u>que</u> canunt feminae* 'and these...' =
feminae<u>que</u> canunt hae =
canunt<u>que</u> hae feminae

(cf *SPQR = Senatus Populus<u>que</u> Romanus*)

How does morphology work?

Suppletion: unrelated stems for same lexeme

good ~ better (vs. *fast ~ faster*)
am, are, be, is, was (vs. *look, looks, looked*)

sok ~ több