

October 12, 2004

## CLASS 6: VARIATION AND PROCESSING

### CLITICS

Clitics are heavily reduced pronouns that, more often than not, attach to a verbal element.

**proclitics:** attach to the left of a root

**enclitics:** attach to the right of a root

English doesn't have "real" clitics (possibly the contracted forms) — but among many other languages, all Romance languages, Arabic dialects, and (Ancient and Modern) Greek do.

### AGGLUTINATIVE ISSUES

Language classification: **isolating** >> **agglutinating** >> **inflectional** >> **polysynthetic**.

Deviation from the **agglutinative ideal** ("every morpheme has one function / meaning"):

- (i) **cumulation:** when a morpheme bears more than one piece of grammatical information
- (ii) **syncretism:** when a single form systematically realizes more than one inflectional form
- (iii) **inflectional allomorphy:** when a morpheme surfaces in more than one specific forms
- (iv) **exponence:** affix for a morphological category / property (*partial, extended, principal*)
- (v) **word-based vs. stem-based inflection:** as in Germanic vs. Romance (and Greek)

**polysynthesis:** morphological compounding deriving rather "large words"

**incorporation:** proper name for "morphological compounding" in polysynthetic languages

**synthetic compounding:** the closest English has for incorporation (see handout for Class 4)

### MORPHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS

**concatenative morphology:** the term for adding morphemes (affixes) on top of one another

- **prefixation:** an affix that targets the left edge of a stem or root ("beginning")
- **affixation:** an affix that targets the right edge of a stem or root ("end")
- **infixation:** an affix that is placed strictly inside another affix or stem
- **circumfixation (confix):** an affix that targets neither edge of a root (English: ???)

**non-concatenative morphology:** when something else derives further forms, such as:

- **reduplication:** repeating a particular sequence of sounds of the stem (*echo, partial, total*)
- **ablaut (apophony):** the general term for vowel change
- **umlaut:** a particular type of vowel change where the targeted vowel is fronted
- **consonant mutation:** a particular type of consonant change

### PROCESSING MODELS

There are (at least) two basic **models** of processing words (e.g., making the right choice):

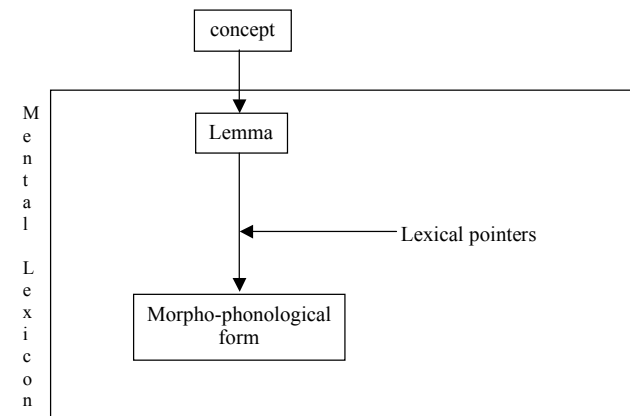
- **serial-autonomous processing:** decisions on word choice are taken in sequence
  - decisions of a certain type are made *before* decisions of another (the next) type
  - ♦ *modular structure* of the language faculty, each module is *informationally encapsulated* [take apart e.g. complex words in terms of category and suffixes]
- **parallel-interactive processing:** information relevant to any decision available at any point
  - there is *no ordering* of decision (types) or other sub-processes
  - ♦ modular structure not necessary, activation of all relevant information *at the same time* [make informed guesses with the help of discourse information/surrounding context]

How to distinguish between the two models? There's no definite answer yet. Some issues:

- **priming** — e.g. mental activation of semantically associated items upon hearing a word [are all options available or only a subset, depending on context? / *neutral vs. primed context*]

### REPRESENTATION OF WORDS

On the structure of the **mental lexicon** — the form of a **lexical entry**:



- **concept:** language-independent concept for a "word": e.g. feline creature (Engl. *cat*)
- **lexical entry:** two levels, one for semantic form and one for morpho-phonological form
- **lemma:** meaning/content of a lexical entry, for example "meaning of 'cat'"
- **form:** morphological and phonological properties of a lexical entry: N, /kæt/, etc.