ENG 235: Morphology and Syntax of English — Fall 2005: TUE & FRI 12.00-13.30
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September 21, 2005

CLASS 7-8: INFLECTION AND MORPHOSYNTAX

TOWARDS INFLECTIONAL MORPHOLOGY

Yes, inflectional morphology is that part of morphology that results in **inflected word forms**. To start from the opposite end: while we all know the regular inflections for words of our language, what do we do with new words aka **coinage**?

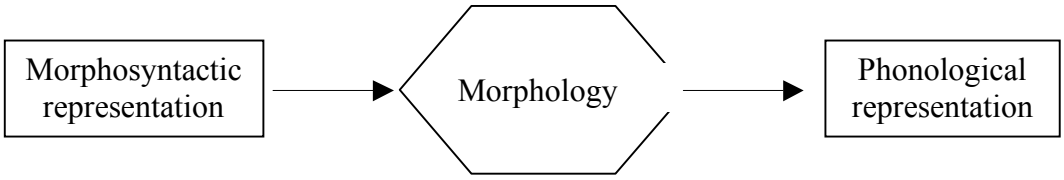
(1) €: EURO / ΕΥΡΩ — what's the plural for English: ***euro*** or ***euros*** …?

Morphosyntax:

*In general, the interaction between morphology and syntax — more specifically, the type of information that inflection gives to a particular lexeme (⇨ **morphosyntactic information**).*

Another term for this stuff is **morphosyntactic feature** or **morphosyntactic property**.

(2)



Exponence:

Exponence *refers to the realization of morphosyntactic features via inflection:*

- *in a one-to-one relationship between form and meaning, we speak of **simple exponence**;*
- *if more than one morphosyntactic feature maps to a single form, **cumulative exponence**;*
- *if a single morphological feature is realized on more than one form, **extended exponence**.*

(3) a. *seas*: sea-**s** [z]
b. *sailed*: sail-**ed** [d]

(4) a. cant-**o** (Latin)
sing-1SG.PRES.IND.ACT
b. agap-**o** (Modern Greek)
love-1SG.PRES.IND.ACT

(5) **ski-, skw-**: 2SG.SUB / 1SG.OBJ (Cherokee)
ci:y-: 1SG.SUB / 3SG.AN.OBJ

(6) ɛ-ka:y 'to divorce' (Kujamaat Jóola)
bu-kə:y 'a divorce'

(7) a. re:x -isti:
rule.**PERF**-2SG.ACT.**PERF**
b. re:x -e:runt (Latin)
rule.**PERF**-3PL.ACT.**PERF**

Context-sensitivity:

*Inflection is **context-free** (simple directional mapping between a morphosyntactic feature and a particular phonological string) or **context-sensitive** (when the realization varies).*

(8) [PRES-PART] / [PROGR]: /-ɪŋ/ *arguing, rolling, passing, limiting, nodding*

(9) [PAST]:

a.	ablaut	*ran, sat, won, drank, shone*
b.	suppletion	*was, went*
c.	zero (Ø)	*hit, cut, put*
d.	/-t/	*sent, lent*
e.	/-d/	*helped [-t], shrugged [-d], wanted [-əd]*

Some inflections are **inherent**, while others are **assigned**: e.g. *pants*, *scissors* vs. *cup-s*. (A typical example of assigned inflection is case, of inherent (pro)nominal gender.)

- **government** — one word dictating the form of another (e.g. V–$NP_{[CASE]}$)
- **concord** (**agreement**) — taking morphosyntactic features of another element (N–A)

INFLECTIONAL FORMS OF LEXICAL CATEGORIES

Nominal inflection in English is pretty much restricted to **number**.

- the suffix *–s* is a **plural morpheme** (for **count nouns**) alongside which we can postulate a **zero plural** or **zero suffix** *–Ø* (for some domesticated/hunted animals)
- others are formed with a **periphrastic form**
- in other languages, we find **dual** and/or **trial** (**paucal**) next to singular and plural
- some languages mark **gender** as well (**masculine** / **feminine** / **neuter**)

Determiners and **pronouns** don't fit into the **open class**, but:

- there is something interesting here concerning this class of category we can say: e.g. THAT surfaces as *that* or *those*, or SHE as *she/her*, and so on
- **case** in English is marked only on pronouns (the lexeme comes in handy again)
- in other languages, we find different cases: **nominative & accusative** vs. **ergative & absolutive** *(transitive vs intransitive)*; **genitive** / **dative** / **instrumental** / **locative**

Verbal inflection marks **person**, **number**, and **tense**.

- in English, we really only get third person singular *–s* as verbal inflection (plus past *–ed* and participial *–ing* / *-en*), but the lexeme BE has a fuller paradigm
- if two or more forms of a lexeme are systematically used elsewhere: **syncretism**
- other languages mark **person** (exclusive vs inclusive and 1st / 2nd / 3rd) and **tense** / **aspect** (imperfective vs perfective) / **mood** / **voice** (active vs. passive)

Adjectives in English only mark the dimension of **comparison** (periphrastically).

WORD AND GRAMMAR

Some suffixes are **dependent on the grammatical context**, others are not:

(10) a. endure-**s**, endur-**ed**, endur-**ing** [***inflection***: trade in function]
b. endur-**ance**, endur-**able**, endur-**er** [***derivation***: trade in meaning]

The forms in (10a) are all inflections of the verb *endure*. We can capture their relation by calling the underlying form a **lexeme**, ENDURE (= intuitively the most basic form).

(11) a. The banks in Cyprus have funny opening hours. [noun_1 BANK]
b. We all sit on the banks and wait. [noun_2 BANK]
c. Everyone banks on something. [verb BANK]

REGULAR AND IRREGULAR INFLECTION

(12) a. walk – walk-ed / lip – lips
b. go – went / tooth – teeth

Regular inflection may come in different allomorphs of one underlying inflectional morpheme. **Irregular inflection**, in contrast, is often an instance of **suppletion**: *distinct roots that stand in suppletive relationship as representatives of one lexeme.*

(13) a. pianist-**s**, ox-**en**, formul-**ae**, cact-**i** (suppleted affix)
b. go – **went**, be – **was** (full suppletion)
c. can – c**ould**, think – th**ought** (partial suppletion)

Since we're not dealing with **roots**, it's easier to use '**suffix**' rather than 'morpheme'.

(14) a. foot – f**ee**t, see – s**aw** (apophony / internal change / ablaut)
b. film-**shmilm**, goal-**shmoa**l (reduplication)

(15) a. Indonesian *rumah* 'house' – *rumah-**rumah*** 'houses' (reduplication)
b. German *Vater* 'father' – *V**ä**ter* 'fathers' (umlaut)
c. Hebrew *lomed* 'studies' – *l**a**m**a**d* 'he studied' (root-and-pattern)
d. Latin *po:t* 'drink.PRESENT' – *po:t**a:v*** 'drink.PERFECTIVE' (stem alternation)

Language typology:

analytic vs synthetic — isolating — inflective (agglutination) — fusional — polysynthetic

But don't worry about these morphological types of languages too much (however: English is…?) — or about the concept of **syncretism** (which doesn't exist in English).

MORPHOSYNTAX

Morphological inflection (a syntactic category expressed through bound forms) should be distinguished from **syntactic inflection** (full-word elements, e.g. modals).

(The first half of the chapter can be ignored; we'll deal with more in the syntax part.)
- structural constraints on morphological inflection
- inflection and Universal Grammar (UG)

Markedness:

For two or more cases, the more neutral one is unmarked, others are marked.

Grammatical Function Change:

Alternations in the grammatical encoding of referential expressions.

(16) a. **The Americans** invaded **Iraq**. *active*
b. **Iraq** was invaded (**by the Americans**). *passive*

Change in **voice**: (unmarked) active vs. (marked) passive; "subject of" / "object of."

(17) a. **The president** made **the Americans** invade Iraq. *causative*
b. The Americans invaded Iraq **for oil**. *benefactive*

antipassive — Greelandic (Eskimo-Aleut, Greenland)

(18) a. Aŋut-**ip** miirqa-**t** paar-**ai**
man-ERG child-PL(ABS) care-INDIC.3SG/SUBJ.3PL/OBJ
b. Aŋut-**Ø** miirqa-**nik** paar-**si-vuq**
man(ABS) child-INSTR care-APASS.INDIC.3SG/SUBJ
'The man takes care of the children.'

causative — Kujamaat Jóola (West Atlantic, Senegal))

(19) ba- la:b bu- tɛy-**ɛn**- ɔla- tɛy- **ɛn**
13CL-sun.DEF13 13CL-run-CAUS-1PL.INCL-run-CAUS
'The sun made us run (= seek shelter).'

applicative — Kivunjo-Kichaga (Bantu, Tanzania)

(20) a. N-a-i-ly-à k-élyà
FOC-1S-PR-eat-FV CL7-food
'S/He is eating food.'
b. N-a-i-lyì-**í**-à `m-kà k-élyà
FOC-1S-PR-eat-APP-FV CL1-wife CL7-food
'S/He is eating food for the benefit of the wife.'

(noun) incorporation — Nahuatl (Uto-Aztecan, Mexico)

(21) a. ni-c-qua in nacatl
I-it-eat the flesh
'I eat the flesh.'
b. ni-**naca**-qua
I-flesh-eat
'I eat flesh.'