Course basics

- Ling 596 Morphology (aka Ling 523)
- MW 5:30–6:45, BA 412
- Instructor: Rob Malouf
- Email: rmalouf@mail.sdsu.edu
- Office hrs: BA 310A, Mondays 1:30-3:00, or by appt
- Class web page: http://rohan.sdsu.edu/~malouf/ling596.html

Course basics

- Introduction to the theoretical principles of word structure
- Topics to be covered:
  - inflection, derivation, and compounding
  - the organization of the lexicon
  - the structure of inflectional paradigms
  - morphophonological and morphosyntactic alternations
  - computational models of words structure
- Prerequisite: Ling 420 or Ling 520

Readings

- Required textbook:
- Optional textbook:
- Additional readings will be posted on the class website as they come up

Requirements

- The final grade will be based on:
  - homework assignments (30%)
  - a take-home midterm exam (30%)
  - a final project (40%)
- Final project
  - For undergrads: take-home exam
  - For grad students: either
    - Term paper, or
    - Computer project
Schedule

Week 1–2  Introduction, basic concepts
Week 3   Rules in the lexicon
Week 4   Inflection and derivation
Week 5   Morphological structure (heads, compounding)
Week 6–7  Inflectional paradigms
Week 8   Midterm review and exam
Week 9–10 Word-based rules (blends, clitics, lexicalism)
Week 10–12 Morphophonology (alternations, level ordering)
Week 12–13 Computational applications (two level rules)
Week 13  Morphosyntax (valence alternations)
Week 14  Productivity and frequency
Week 15  Wrap-up and review

Morphology

- Ferdinand de Saussure (1916)
- The sign is a relation between form and meaning
- This relationship is arbitrary
- But, what about relationships like:
  
  ![Diagram](dog cat dogs cats)

The key insight behind morphology is that signs aren't completely arbitrary: words with similar forms tend to have similar meanings.

“Morphology is the study of the systematic covariation in the form and meaning of words.” (p. 2)

Not: “Morphology is the study of the combination of morphemes to form words.” (p. 3)

- Morphology is where linguistic oppositions meet
- Form vs. content
- Paradigmatic vs. syntagmatic relations
  - rely
  - reli-able
  - reli-ab-ly
  - un-reli-ab-ly
- Diachronic vs. synchronic developments
  - well-ness
  - trans-gress-ive
  - helico-pter
• Morphology is about words, but what is a word?
• Orthographic word
  • “Naive” definition
  • Meaningless for unwritten languages
  • Problematic for written languages
    used to
    hors d’oeuvre
    the mayor of San Diego’s house

• Syntactic words: syntax treats some elements as atomic
• Lexical integrity:
  walked very slowly
  *walked slow-very-ly
• Anaphoric islands:
  Pat had a glass of wine and spilled some of it on the table.
  ??Pat bought a wine bottle and spilled some of it on the table.
  *Pat visited a winery and hated its taste.
• But, what about things like English you’re, they’ll’ve or
  German vom Faß (=von dem Faß)

• Phonological word: domain of phonological processes
• Stress in English compounds
  apple pie
cárrot cake
• Finnish vowel harmony (back=/y, ä, ö/, front=/a, o, u/)
  puku ‘dress’
  kyky ‘ability’
talo ‘house’
  sülö ‘splinter’
kunto ‘condition’
  kyntö ‘plowing’
talo-na ‘house-ESS’
  kylö-nä ‘village-ESS’
• But, pääkaupunki ‘capitol city’ is two words for harmony yet
  one word for stress assignment

• Noun incorporation in Onondaga
  wa’hahninú?
  ne? oří?kwa?
  TNS-heiT-buy-ASP PRT PRE-tobacco-SG
  ‘He bought the tobacco.’
  wa’haye?kwa:hínú?
  TNS-heiT-tobacco-buy-ASP
  ‘He bought (a kind of) tobacco.’
Words

- Semantic words are atoms of meaning
- The meaning of phrases and sentences is constructed compositionally from the meanings of words
- But:
  - multi-word lexical items
    in spite of, next to
  - phrasal verbs
    look up, check out
  - idioms
    kick the bucket, keep tabs on

Morphology

- Goals of morphological theory
  - Elegant description: Parsimony, symmetry
  - Cognitively realistic description: Language acquisition, psycholinguistics
  - System-external explanation: Cognitive and functional approaches
  - Restrictive architecture for description: Formal approaches

Modularity

- Where is morphology?
- Interface between syntax and lexicon?
- Is morphology a separate module?
- Split Morphology Hypothesis

Homework

- For Wednesday 1/26
  - Read Chapter 1
- For Monday 1/31
  - Read Chapter 2
  - Do exercises 1.2 and 1.3