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
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Ferdinand de Saussure (1916)

- The sign is a relation between form and meaning
- This relationship is arbitrary

But, what about relationships like:

```
dog <-> cat

dogs <-> cats
```
Morphology

- 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

• 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
Words

- Phonological word: domain of phonological processes
- Stress in English compounds
  - apple pie
  - cárr ot 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
Words

• **Syntactic words**: syntax treats some elements as atomic

• **Lexical integrity**:

  \[
  \text{walked very slowly}
  \]

  \[
  \text{*walked slow-very-ly}
  \]

• **Anaphoric islands**:

  \[
  \text{Pat had a glass of wine and spilled some of it on the table.}
  \]

  \[
  \text{Pat bought a wine bottle and spilled some of it on the table.}
  \]

  \[
  \text{*Pat visited a winery and hated its taste.}
  \]

• **But, what about things like English you’re, they’ll’ve or German vom Faß (=von dem Faß)**
Words

- **Noun incorporation in Onondaga**

  
  waʔhahninúʔ ne? oýéʔkwaʔ
  TNS-he:it-buy-ASP PRT PRE-tobacco-SG
  ‘He bought the tobacco.’

  waʔhayɛʔkwahní:nuʔ
  TNS-he:it-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