

Introduction to Linguistics

Morphology 1

Words

- objects in the mental lexicon
- written form separated by spaces (this indicates the independence of words, that is, they can stand freely on their own)
- spoken form not so obvious but there are clues
- stress placement - only one main stress in each word
- in some languages, like French, stress is always in the same position, e.g. *ami* 'friend', *spaghetti* 'spaghetti', *nacionalisati3n* 'nationalization'
- English varies a bit, but stress is still helpful
 - also, restrictions on sounds, e.g. [h] only at the beginning of a syllable/word, [ŋ] only at

Homonyms and Homophones

- homonym: same sounds and same spelling (bear 'the animal' vs 'to carry, endure')
- homophone: same sounds but different spelling (bear vs. bare)
- homograph: lead ([li:d] vs. [led]), read ([ri:d] vs. [red])

The Mental Lexicon

- stores unpredictable information about:
 - meaning
 - pronunciation (the actual sounds, not a phonetic spelling)
 - perhaps spelling (depends on speaker and existence of a writing system)
 - grammatical category (noun, verb, adjective, etc.)
 - countability (*cows* vs. *cattle*)
 - graphic representations of the concept, etc.

Dictionaries

- typically printed, either on paper or electronically
- contain similar information to the mental lexicon, but are not the same:
 - regional/dialectal pronunciations missing
 - historical information about words often included
- because language changes constantly, dictionaries become outdated very quickly
- new words come into the language continually, e.g. to text someone, to google something, etc.

Dictionary

- printed material
- alphabetical
- fixed pronunciation in phonetic alphabet
- contains historical information/ etymology
- may contain many uncommon words
- quickly out of date

Mental Lexicon

- in the mind of the speaker
- topical, sense groups
- varies with speaker (audio representation)
- no historical/etymological info
- contents depends on individual's experience
- constantly updated

Content Words

- different types of words
- content words are meaningful and belong to major word classes such as verb, noun, adjective, etc
- content words form an open class: new ones may be added at any time

Function Words

- function words perform grammatical tasks: conjunctions, prepositions, articles, pronouns, etc.
- closed class: not usual to add new function words
- evidence from aphasics shows different abilities with respect to the use of function words (Broca's aphasia)
- evidence from slips of the tongue: occurs with content words but not function words

- evidence from language acquisition: young children speak with mainly content words at the beginning, e.g. mommy good, doggie bark, etc.

Morphemes

- ‘minimal unit of meaning’
- words are made up of one or more morphemes
- morphemes are made up of sounds
 - the sounds have no specific meaning: ‘d’ in ‘dog’ doesn’t mean anything
- morphemes may have various shapes, short: *eye* [aɪ] or long: *bungalow* [bʌŋgələʊ]
- may modify another morpheme: *paint* → *painter*, *repaint*, *painting*, etc.
- discreteness: smaller units combine to form larger units:
 - sounds → morphemes → words → sentences
- creativity: we can make new words by combining morphemes: to *text* someone → to *re-text* them

Bound versus Free Morphemes

- free morphemes: morphemes that can stand alone as words: *eye*, *run*, *persimmon*, etc.
- free morphemes may be combined (= compound)
- their order doesn’t matter:
 - arm-chair* ‘a chair with arms’ *chair-arm* ‘the arm of a chair’
- bound morphemes: must be *bound to* or attach to another morpheme: *un-*, *-er*, *-ate*, *-ish*, etc.
- order is usually fixed

Bound Morphemes

- prefixes and suffixes: morphemes that appear before or after others
- prefixes are attached in front of words, e.g. *re-paint*, *un-desirable*, *in-accurate*, etc.
- suffixes are attached at the end of words, e.g. *paint-er*, *hyphen-ate*, *tall-er*, *greenish*, etc.
- infixes: not really used in English - the closest thing in English is the placement of certain words in the middle of other words to make an emphatic form *absolutely* → *abso-**bloody**-lutely*
- English doesn’t have circumfixes

Roots and Stems

- a root is a basic, meaningful morpheme that acts as the core of a word
 - it may be free, as in *dog*, *love*, *blue*, etc. or
 - bound as in *phon-* (***phonology***, ***telephone***), or *-ceive* (*receive*, *deceive*)
- a stem contains both a root and one or more affixes, e.g. *receive*, *painter*, etc.
- Huckleberries? some morphemes have no obvious meaning and must be combined with other morphemes to have a meaning, e.g. *huckleberry*, *cranberry*, etc.

Rules of Word Formation

- we can use morphological rules to create new words, e.g.,
 - add *-er* onto a verb to make a noun meaning person or thing that does the verb
 - paint* → *painter* *sing* → *singer*, etc.
- begin with informal rules such as: ‘add suffix to X’
- then formalize the rules

Derivational Morphology

- derivational morphology is concerned with building new words, by combining morphemes

nátion	glóbe	néuter
nátional	glóbal	néutral
nátionalize	glóbalize	néutralize
nátionalítý	glóbalítý	néutralítý
nátionalizátion	glóbalizátion	néutralizátion

- there are various effects that may occur when adding new morphemes, such as effects on the stress