Chapter 1

Thinking about Morphology and Morphological Analysis

Coursebook

- Aronoff, M. & K. A. Fudeman. 2011. *What is morphology?* Wiley-Blackwell. Second Edition

- Other textbooks (Haspelmath, Booij, and others) are also available

- This textbook is **nice**. It's not difficult

Elearning website

- Go to elearning.shisu.edu.cn and enroll in the Morphology 2017 course
  - password for self-enrollment: morpho2017
  - course documents (course outline, PDFs of PPTs, extra material)
  - announcements & blog posts
  - questions and discussion
  - glossary of morphological terms
  - *new words*! (in Phonology)

Course grading

- Homework : handing in *Optional!*

- Final grade is based on midterm and final essay, and <u>active participation</u> in class

- Final essay should be about the morphology of English, or any other language
  - *may be combined with phonology*
  - keep your eyes and ears open: new words/morphemes

Contents of Chapter 1

- what is morphology?
- new words
- cross-linguistic differences
- place of morphology in linguistics
- morphological analysis

What is morphology?

- In <u>biology</u>: study of the form and structure of organisms: <u>shapes</u>
  - also: <u>geology</u> (e.g. crater morphology)

- In <u>linguistics</u>:
  - form and internal structure of <u>words</u>
    - as opposed to the internal structure of sentences (or sounds)
  - mental system involved in word formation

Morphemes

- Morphemes = smallest meaningful units
  - either concrete: house, door, fear
  - or abstract: plural, not, progressive tense

- One morpheme can take different shapes: allomorphs
  - cf. allophones: different shapes of phonemes
  - typically the *abstract* ones change their shape. Example: English plural

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Complex structures

- Examples of complex word structures:
  - houses (cf.: mice)
  - feeling (cf.: farthing)
  - uninteresting (cf.: cranberry)
    - **evidence**: units can freely be used in other combinations, even in new or nonsense words (=productive), e.g. snafus
- Roots (or *stems* – **verb stems**), affixes (prefixes and suffixes)

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One morpheme

- One morpheme : one meaning (?)
  - -gate (nutgate) (other new morphemes? -exit)

- One morpheme : one function
  - bottle N or V: two morphemes?
  - -ly in lovely and quickly ?

- Infixes, circumfixes (1 morpheme, 2 parts)
  - gr-**um**-adwet   'graduates' (Tagalog)
  - **ge**-broch-**en**   'broken' (German)

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Morphology in action

- New words come into the language (**any** language!) every day (and also disappear from the language every day)

- Entirely new words (hobbit)
- Active (productive) morphological processes (unbreak, unfollow, defriend)
  - Surprising to hear new words (unlike new sentences): attracts attention, especially new words from existing morphemes
  - New words in Chinese? (pa, lūsě)
    - http://languagelog.ldc.upenn.edu/nll/?p=22371

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Abstract morphology

- Differences between languages
  - English plural – Chinese plural
    melon-melons   西瓜 (*西瓜们)
               but 老师们
    no languages have a plural only for inanimate objects
    - class essay: phonological, syntactic, semantic, pragmatic constraints on –men suffixation in standard Chinese
    - or think about your dialects

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Cross-linguistic morphology

- What are the limits of variations between languages in the field of morphology?
- Morphological categories:
  - *plural*: singular, dual, trial, many, plural
  - *tense*: present, past, perfect, near future
  - *"truthfulness"*: hearsay, eye-witness, lie
  - …
- Most interesting aspect: determine what humans pay attention to in such a way that it is reflected in language: a window on the mind!
  - if it is reflected in the language, is it also more important for the speakers?

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Recent research

- "Children who speak a language without a separate morpheme for <u>future tense</u> (e.g. Dutch, German, English, Chinese) are <u>more patient</u> than children who speak a language that does have such a morpheme (e.g. Italian, other Romance languages)"
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stanford_marshmallow_experiment
  - or are more prone to saving (→ Internet)

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Morphology in linguistics

- Branches of linguistics: phonology, syntax, phonetics, semantics, **morphology**
- Relations between these fields (<u>morphophonology</u>, morphology-syntax interface)
- Morphology part of syntax / phonology?
- **Autonomous** morphology?

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Linguistic principles

- Some principles in linguistics seem similar across different modules
  - e.g. 'structure' plays a role in syntax, phonology, and morphology
  - also: 'heads' (government, dependency)
  - also: deletion
    - deletion rules in phonology
    - in syntax: ellipsis
      - John can play the guitar, and Mary __ the violin

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Approach

- general "theories" about linguistics in general or morphology in particular
  - tradition
- psycholinguistic evidence (e.g. productivity)
- neurolinguistic evidence (imaging)
- statistics (corpus research)
  - real language use

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Morphological approaches

- Combination of analysis and synthesis:
  - **Analysis**: breaking words down into parts
  - **Synthesis**: constructing a theory of how the pieces are put together: how does it work? how does it fit in with phonology, syntax, etc.?

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Analytic principles

1. Same meaning and same pronunciation = 1 morpheme
   - e.g. un-<u>intent</u>-ion-al

2. Same meaning and different sound shapes = maybe 1 morpheme
   - allomorphs of one morpheme, e.g. im-, il-

3. Not all morphemes are whole segments
   - e.g. tones, German plurals, English (next slide)

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Non-segmental morphemes

- E.g. one high tone / Question intonation
- Or English:
  - house (N)   - house (V)
  - breath (N)   - breathe (V)
  - cloth (N)   - clothe (V)
- Feature [+voice] (also vowel length)
  - CONtract (N)   - conTRACT (V)

4. Morpheme may have a zero allomorph
  - English fish – fish (vs. Jp. sakana-sakana)
  - or even take a segment away (subtraction)

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Important

- Practise!

  - exercises on Aztec (p. 17/18), French (p. 20). Try for yourself.
  - throughout the book: Kujamaat Jóola, West-African language spoken in Senegal
  - study these carefully

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Homework

- Please read Ch. 1 carefully, note down any questions you may have

- Please prepare exercises **1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14** for class

- **Every week**: Find **new words** in English or Chinese or any other language
  - especially when morphologically interesting
  - we'll deal with these in the phono class

- Thank you~

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