Morphology

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Overview

- General Comments

- Review

- Morphemes and Allomorphs

- Word Structure
  - Practice

- Approaching Morphological Problems
  - Practice

General Comments

- Homeworks and Writing Assignments will be returned tomorrow
  - You can have two separate phonemes in a dataset!
  - Writing Assignments

Review

- Morphemes
- Allomorphs

Morphemes and Allomorphs

- **Morpheme**
  - "The smallest unit of language that carries information about meaning or function" (*CL*, p. 117).
  - A systematic sound-meaning correspondence.
  - Cannot be further divided without losing its corresponding meaning.
  - Are stored in the mental lexicon of native speakers.
  - One **Morpheme** can correspond to more than one surface representation (i.e. **allomorph**).

Morphemes and Allomorphs

- There are two types of morphemes:
  - Free
    - Morphemes that can correspond to a meaning when they occur in isolation.
      - E.g. *captain, ship, star*
  - Bound
    - Morphemes that <u>must co-occur with other morphemes</u>.
      - E.g. *in-, -s, -ing*

Word Structure

- When analyzing words, be sure to not only understand the morphemes in terms of their meaning, but also in how they work with the other morphemes to create the composite meaning of the word. (*CL,* p. 118).

- There are several different ways to describe the different roles that morphemes play in word structure:
  - Root
  - Affix
  - Base

Word Structure

- Root
  - Every word contains at least one **root**.
  - "The core of the word [which] carries the major components of its meaning" (*CL*, p. 119)
  - "Typically belong[s] to a **lexical category**" (*CL*, p. 119)
    - What do we mean by **lexical category**?
      - Meaning-based?
        - » Is a N always a "person, place, or thing?"
      - Inflection-based?
        - » Can be useful, but there tend to be exceptional category members, so be careful.
      - Distribution-based?
        - » **Most useful and reliable**

Word Structure

- Distribution is the best way to determine a word's **lexical category**:
  - (based on table 5.3 from *CL*, p. 159, with new examples)

Category	Distributional property	Examples
Noun (N)	Occurs with a determiner ("article")	*a book* *the tiger*
Verb (V)	Occurs with an auxiliary ("helping V")	*can promote* *may rebound*
Adjective (A)	Occurs with a degree word	*very considerate* *too timid*

Word Structure

- Affixes
  - Do not belong to a **lexical category**, but can attach to the root to add additional meaning to the word.
  - Are all **bound** morphemes. (*CL,* p. 119).
  - Different types of affixes:
    - Prefix
      - E.g. *un-* in *unworthy*
    - Suffix
      - E.g. *–ed* in *suceeded*
    - Infix
      - E.g. *California → Cali-freakin'-fornia*
        fantastic → fan-freakin'-tastic
        awesome → ?? ; unbelievable → ??
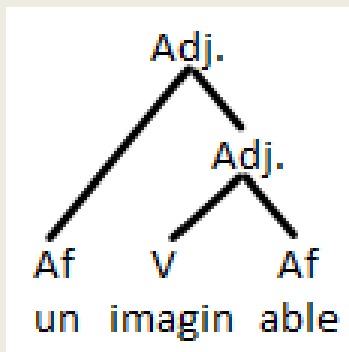   » What is the role of stress in this pattern?

Word Structure

- Base
  - "The form to which an affix is added" (*CL*, p. 119)
    - The **base** is not necessarily always the same as the word's **root**.
      - *Incomplete* vs. *incomparable*

Word Structure

- We indicate word structure through diagramming word **trees**:
  - Indicates the lexical categories of the morphemes, and the orders in which they are combined.
  - E.g.

    ```
              Adj.
             /    \
            /     Adj.
           /      /  \
          /      /    \
         Af     V     Af
         un  imagin  able
    ```

  - To diagram a word, always **begin with the root** and work your way out from there.

Word Structure

- It is important to note that morphology is not the same as **etymology**.
  - There may be instances where English has adopted some systematic correspondences from other languages. However, this does not mean that they produce actual morphemes in English.
- *Confer, refer, prefer, transfer, defer, infer*
  - Is *fer* a morpheme for an English speaker?
- *Karate, karaoke*
  - Is *kara* a morpheme for an English speaker
- Does an infant **acquiring** the mental grammar of English morphology have access to information about **etymology**?
  - (Do babies already know Latin or Japanese?)

Word Structure

- Draw the trees for the words in the next column.
  - Remember that you should **start with identifying the root**.
  - You should have the **lexical category** for each morpheme and the nodes above. Remember, lexical category is based on **distribution**.
  - Also, think about what the meaning of each part of the word would be.

- rewriter
- taller
- under
- referral
- construction
- domestic
- domesticate
- domestication
- disobey
- displeased
- disappoint

Approaching Morphology Problems

- Remember what a **morpheme** is:
  - A systematic sound-meaning correspondence, which cannot be further divided without losing its meaning.
- Go through the dataset, looking for instances of the meaning that you want to see, and compare with other words that differ only slightly in definition.
- Pick out the sounds that appear consistently in the words that contain the same type of meaning, and that consistently disappear in the words that don't contain that same type of meaning.

Approaching Morpheme Problems

- Step 1: Compare all of the words that share the meaning that you are looking for. What segments do they have in common? Write these down.

- Step 2: Look at the words that differ in meaning from the meaning that you are looking for. Does any part of the segments you are proposing as the morpheme occur in these words? If so, remove that part of your proposed morpheme.

- **Note**: Once you use a portion of the word for one proposed morpheme, you cannot use any part of that proposed morpheme for another morpheme.

- **However, it is possible that you can have morphemes that have similar segments in the same location. (i.e. if one replaces the other)**

Approaching Morpheme Problems

- **Some things to note:**
  - You should not assume that morphemes will occur in the same order in other languages as they do in English.
  - You should not assume that the all languages encode the same types of meaning that English does, and vice versa.
    - E.g. Some languages have the feature DUAL person.
  - It is possible for there to be null morphemes.
    - E.g. *This is my sheep*. *Those are my sheep*.

Morphology Problem Practice

- Swahili Dataset

- What do you propose is the morpheme in Swahili for:
  - 'like', 'beat', 'pay'
  - FUTURE, PAST
  - Subjects: 'I', 'you', 's/he', 'we'
  - Objects: 'me', 'them', 'you'

Homeworks

- p. 147, Exercise 2
- p.148, Exercise 4
- p. 149, Exercise 6
- p. 149, Exercise 9

Have a good day!