

Handout 2

WEEK 2

Word Formation in Concatenative Morphologies:

Hippisley & Stump p. 433 (4) – 435; Bauer 17 (2.6) 19-21 (2.8 and 2.9) 31-33 (2.13 and 2.14)

Words can be formed through multiple methods, perhaps the most popular of which (in English) is affixation.

How does word formation actually work? What are the differences between the notions of 'word', 'token' and 'lexeme'?

Is concatenation tantamount to affixation?

This is one of the important questions to be asked here. Is concatenation what enables affixation? Or is it because morphemes are separable into distinct strings (roots, stems and affixes) that we have a concatenative morphology?

Most concatenative processes of English can be reduced to A + STEM + A (where A stands for affix).

Compounding, on the other hand, is a concatenative process that looks like "STEM + STEM", which is not a clear case of affixation.

In a concatenative morphology, different words may belong to the same paradigm if they **share a stem**. Cut-cutting-cutter are said to belong to the same paradigm as they all include the stem 'cut'.

Reanalysis and analogy are always a 'risk', but are instances of coinage rather than formation.

Stems can be compared to roots in non-concatenative morphologies.

Bound and free morphemes are two types of morphemes where the former only occurs with another morpheme, i.e. never on its own, while the latter may appear as a standalone word.

An example of a free morpheme would be 'cat' as it can be its own word, a bound morpheme, however, would be the plural '-s' in 'cats' as it can never occur as -s in isolation.

What happens when two free morphemes combine? What about one bound and free morpheme? Can two bound morphemes combine to create a word? Think of examples for each of these questions.

Concatenation allows for easier surface analysis. Take a word like 'kingship'. This word can easily be identified as two morphemes, the first of which is free, while the second is bound 'king' and '-ship'. However, this '-ship' morpheme which is an appendix to nouns, forming other nouns representing a 'state of being', should not be confused with the free morpheme 'ship' as in a big boat.

Some problems related to surface analysis include:

Morphophonological derivation: Is atomic derived from atom + -ic? Is this one process or two, knowing that stress also shifts?

1. Cranberry morphemes: morphemes that appear to be separable on the surface but actually are not, and have no individual meanings. 'Ruthless' could be analyzed as ruth + -less, as in without ruth, but what is ruth?
2. Semantic change: Think of words like 'footage' that can be analyzed as foot + -age, but actually has nothing to do with feet anymore, even though it used to.
3. Folk etymology and analogy: What about 'boomerang', where, if someone is unaware of the origins of the word, might mistake this for having the stem 'boom'.

Some word formation processes in English:

Compounding: Compounding is the process of taking two already existing words and putting them together to create a new word. Think of 'mousepad', which is the result of compounding 'mouse' + 'pad'. What other compound words can you think of?

Blending: Blending is the process of fusing two or more words, but fusing one part of the word with another part of the other word, not whole words. Think of 'webinar' a blend of 'web' and 'seminar'. 'Motel' is an example of 'motor' and 'hotel'.

Conversion: Conversion is the process of changing the grammatical category of a word (part of speech or class) with the zero affix. This means that we get a new word without adding anything to it. 'Command' as a noun and 'command' as a verb. However, there are many words such as 'progress' as a noun and 'progress' as a verb that have no affixes involved, but rather a shift of stress

Question: Are blending and conversion still concatenative processes?

Back formation: This process can be thought of as the opposite of affixation. Instead of adding an affix to a word, we remove an existing affix, ending up with a new form of the word. The verb 'to babysit', for example, is a back formation of 'babysitter'.

Allomorphy: Allomorphy is when the same morpheme has more than one phonetic realization. This means that a morpheme that carries the exact same meaning may have more than one phonetic 'shape' or 'pronunciation'.

WEEK 3

Word Formation in Non-concatenative Morphologies:

Davis and Tsujimura p. 5-18 (319-332)

As an example of a well-developed non concatenative system, Arabic provides ample evidence of the concatenation dichotomy.

Unlike English and Hungarian, the Arabic verbal and nominal system (apart from inflectional morphology) heavily relies on templates.

This means that Arabic verbs of different degrees, i.e. semantic levels, cannot be compositionally analyzed.

To begin an analysis of Arabic words, we will introduce the notion of the root:

Two, three or four consonants with a fixed general meaning.

The most common type of these roots is the triconsonantal root where all three root radicals (consonants) are obstruents.

This means that roots like 'k-s-r' 's-f-r' and 'd-f-š' make up the bigger part of the root inventory.

Let us take the first root 'k-s-r' with the meaning 'related to breaking'

In the lexicon, the root is abstract and needs a vocalic melody to manifest.

The different vocalic melodies are called forms, measures, or binyanim.

A verb of the first measure, i.e. Form I in Arabic, has a certain template: C₁aC₂aC₃.

This template now holds a semantic meaning associated with the meaning of the root, where the new formed meaning of the whole word here is the sum of the meaning of the root and the template.

C₁aC₂aC₃ is a semantically basic verb, with no extra strata, that is, 'kasar' would mean 'to break'.

Different templates carry different meanings.

The template C₁aC₂C₂aC₃, where a germination operation occurs on the second root radical, is either a causative or intensive verb. Thus, 'kassar' means 'to break something to pieces (intensive)'.

However simple this templatic morphology may seem, we fall into problems when tackling issues like template allomorphy, for example.

Template allomorphy occurs when two or more templates express the same meaning.

This is more problematic than allomorphy in a concatenative system for the following reasons:

1. In a concatenative morphology, allomorphy either alters the stem or the affix, but that alteration is more often than not only a phonetic matter.
2. In a non-concatenative system, templates are limited, this means that there is a finite number of templates. This poses a problem with allomorphy because it practically means that the same template may express two or more meanings, i.e. we lose the one-to-one correspondence between template and meaning.

Consider the following templates:

Form I: C₁aC₂aC₃ (basic verb).

Form II: C₁aC₂C₂aC₃ (causative/intensive verb)

For some roots, there is a gap in the paradigm, in that the root lacks a form I, but has a form II, so its 'basic' meaning, then, is expressed by form I instead of form II. Examples will be given in class.

This also means that, for such a root [lacking form I], form II cannot be the causative/intensive anymore because form II here is actually an allomorph of form I, i.e. the 'basic' meaning. Here, we also face the issue of expressing causativity with a template. For such a root, causativity can only be expressed periphrastically.