

## Morphology glossary

Below are the current list of terms introduced in lectures for LIN333H1 at the University of Toronto, Spring 2019.

### Acronyms

**DM** Distributed Morphology

**IA** item-and-arrangement

**IP** item-and-process

**SLH** strong lexicalist hypothesis

**VI** Stands either for **Vocabulary Item** or **Vocabulary Insertion**, depending on context.

**WLH** weak lexicalist hypothesis

**WP** word-and-paradigm

### Terms

**affix** A morpheme that cannot not generally exist on its own and must attach to other elements.

**allomorph** An allomorph is one of two or more complementary surface forms of a morpheme that surfaces in different phonological or morphological environments.

**attributive compound** A compound in which the non-head predicates some properties of the head.

**base** An element to which an affix attaches.

**blocking** A phenomenon where the existence of an irregular morphological form prevents the use of the regular (predictable) form.

**bound morpheme** A morpheme that cannot stand on its own and that must attach to another morpheme.

**bracketing paradox** A kind of syntax–morphology mismatch where the bracketing predicted by the syntactic structure or semantic meaning does not match the bracketing of the morphological structure.

**circumfix** A discontinuous affix placed around its base.

**complex head** An element that behaves syntactically as a head but which is syntactically complex. Usually assembled in the syntax by head-to-head movement and head adjunction.

**compounding** A derivational process that combines

two morphologically free elements to form a new word.

**concatenation** The process of imposing a linear order between two morphosyntactic elements.

**constructionism** An approach to morphological theorizing that proposes that the system that derives syntactic structures is also responsible for deriving morphology.

**contextual inflection** Inflectional morphology that is dictated by syntax, such as person and number markers on verbs that agree with subjects and/or objects, agreement markers for adjectives, and structural case markers on nouns (Booij 1996).

**contrastiveness** Morphemes should be able to be replaced with other morphemes in the same context (Fábregas and Scalise 2012).

**conversion** Morphological derivation that has no phonological effect on the base word.

**coordinative compound** A compound whose elements behave as though they are conjoined.

**cranberry morpheme** An element that appears in a morphologically complex word that appears to be a morpheme but has no meaning of its own and appears in no other word.

**derivational morphology** Morphological processes or elements responsible for forming new words.

**desinence** An affix indicating the morphological class to which a noun belongs. Plays a similar role to theme vowels in verbs.

**dissociated morpheme** In *Distributed Morphology (DM)*, a morpheme added postsyntactically to the morphological structure after syntax.

**encyclopedia** In *DM*, a list storing unpredictable information about meanings associated with (combinations of) morphemes, including the meaning of Roots, functional morphemes, idioms as well, and additional information about how Roots are interpreted in the contexts they appear. See also Marantz (1997).

**endocentricity** A property of some compounds where one word in the compound serves as the head determining the grammatical and semantic properties of the compound.

**excorporation** Movement out of a complex head. This widely thought to be impossible (Baker 1988).

**existent word** A word that exists in a speaker's lexicon.

**exocentricity** A property of some compounds where no word in the compound serves as the head.

**exponent** In *DM*, phonological material inserted into a syntactic terminal by Vocabulary Insertion.

**feature bundle** In *DM*, a functional morpheme comprises a set of features.

**Fission** In *DM*, an operation which takes a single node in the syntax and splits it into two nodes in the morphological representation.

**free morpheme** A morpheme that can appear as a word on its own.

**Fusion** In *DM*, an operation that combines two sister nodes into a single  $X^0$ , with the features of both input nodes, but no internal structure.

**head** A morphological element that determines the grammatical properties of some morphosyntactic unit.

1) **head (affixation)** The morpheme in a word that determines the grammatical properties of that word, including its syntactic category and its inflectional properties.

2) **head (compounding)** The word in a compound that determines the grammatical and semantic properties of the compound, including its syntactic category and its inflectional properties.

**Head Movement Constraint** 'An  $X^0$  may only move into the  $Y^0$  which properly governs it' (Travis 1984: 131). Requires a head to move to the next immediately c-commanding, projecting head.

**Impoverishment** In *DM*, deletion of features from a morphosyntactic representation, prior to Vocabulary Insertion, with the result that impoverishment yields surface neutralization of underlying contrasts.

**infix** An affix placed within a base.

**inflectional morphology** Morphological processes or elements that change the form of an existing word.

**inherent inflection** Inflectional morphology that is not required by the syntactic context, although it may have syntactic relevance (Booij 1996). Examples include the category number for nouns, comparative and superlative degree of the adjective, and tense and aspect for verbs.

**isolability** It must be possible to identify a morpheme and separate it from the rest of the word (Fábregas and Scalise 2012).

**item-and-arrangement** A class of morphological theories that assumes morphemes exist (*i.e.*, that they are listed in the lexicon) and that they are mappings between form and meaning.

**item-and-process** A class of morphological theories that denies that morphemes exist. They assume that elements in the lexicon are operated on by various operations that change the forms of words.

**lexeme** A element of the lexicon in *item-and-process (IP)* theories. These can be words, but in some formulations they are stems.

**lexicalism** An approach to morphological theory that proposes that the systems deriving syntactic structures are distinct from those deriving complex words. These approaches assume word formation occurs in the lexicon.

**Local Dislocation** An implementation of *Morphological Merger* proposed by Embick and Noyer

(2001) that swaps the order of linearly adjacent elements at or after Vocabulary Insertion.

**Lowering** One implementation of **Morphological Merger** proposed by Embick and Noyer (2001).

**M-Word** (Potentially complex) head not dominated by a further head-projection (Embick 2015).

**meaning** A morpheme must be associated with a specific meaning (Fábregas and Scalise 2012).

**Mirror Principle** Morphological derivations must directly reflect syntactic derivations and *vice-versa* (Baker 1985: 375).

**morpheme** The basic elements manipulated by the morphology. On the traditional definition, they are pairings between form and meaning, and the smallest meaningful linguistic unit.

**morphological ambiguity** A phenomenon that occurs when the same set of affixes can be combined in different ways, giving rise to different morphological structures.

**Morphological Merger** An operation where a relation between X and Y may be replaced by (expressed by) the affixation of the lexical head of X to the lexical head of Y.

**No Tangling** An assumption that limits the number of possible linearizations by assuming that branches in a tree will never cross each other.

**nominalization** Derivational processes that produce nouns from verbs and adjectives.

**nonconcatenative morphology** A form of word formation that does not involve stringing morphemes together sequentially.

**paradigm** A set of all of the forms of a word, usually arranged by features or properties that each form has.

**parasyntesis** A derivational phenomenon where prefixing and suffixing must occur simultaneously.

**potential word** A word that can be generated by morphological rules but is not included in the lexicon of a language.

**prefix** An affix that precedes its base.

**productivity** The degree to which a speaker can use a morpheme to inflect a word or derive a new word.

**readjustment rule** In **DM**, rules that alter the form of an underlying representation (typically a root) in some morphological context.

**realizational morphology** Categorizes approaches to morphology where the forms of morphemes are determined by features or properties that those morphemes have.

**recurrency** A morpheme cannot be restricted to one specific context (Fábregas and Scalise 2012).

**replacive morphology** A morphological phenomenon where some phonological subpart of a base is replaced with some other material.

**root** The core of a (lexical) word.

1) **root** In **DM**, category-neutral syntactic terminals that make up open class or lexical vocabulary and do not have any syntactic or semantic features.

2) **root** In traditional morphology, the irreducible core of a word, with absolutely no other morphological elements attached to it (Katamba and Stonham 2006). The core meaning of the word is usually associated with this element.

**strong lexicalist hypothesis** A lexicalist hypothesis that proposes that both derivational and inflectional morphology occurs in the lexicon. The syntax plays no direct role in determining the form of a word.

**subordinative compound** A compound where the non-head is in a similar relation to the head as an argument to a predicate.

**Subset Principle** ‘The phonological exponent of a Vocabulary Item is inserted into a position if the item matches all or a subset of the features specified in that position. Insertion does not take place if the Vocabulary Item contains features not present in the morpheme. Where several Vocabulary Items meet the conditions for insertion, the item matching the greatest number of features specified in the terminal morpheme must be chosen.’ (Halle 1997)

**subtractive morphology** A morphological phenomenon where some subpart of the base is deleted or removed. Sometimes called **DISFIXATION**.

**Subword** A terminal node and, therefore, a morpheme (either a functional morpheme, or a Root) (Embick 2015).

**suffix** An affix that follows its base.

**suppletion** Suppletion is a form of allomorphy where the resulting allomorph of a morpheme which has no phonological similarity to the other allomorphs.

**syncretism** Situations in which distinct syntacticosemantic environments (*i.e.*, distinct sets of synsem features bundled into a morpheme) show the same phonological exponent (Embick 2015).

**synsem feature** Features from the universal inventory of syntacticosemantic features; *e.g.*, [PAST] ('past'), [DEF] ('definite'), [PL] ('plural'), *etc.* (Embick 2015).

**synthetic compound** A kind of compound whose head is derived from a verb by affixation, and where the non-head is an argument of the verb.

**theme vowel** An affix indicating the morphological class to which a verb (or other categories of word) belong.

**transfix** A discontinuous affix interspersed in its base.

**underspecification** Describes Vocabulary Items that

have a subset of the features that can be specified in a single syntactic terminal that it can apply to. This is one mechanism that can lead to **syncretism** (the other being Impoverishment).

**verbalization** Derivational processes that produce verbs from nouns and adjectives.

**Vocabulary Insertion** In DM, an operation pairing syntactic terminals with phonological underlying representations.

**Vocabulary Item** In DM, objects in which phonological exponents are paired with conditions on insertion, stated in terms of features of functional morphemes.

**weak lexicalist hypothesis** A lexicalist hypothesis that proposes that derivational morphology occurs in the lexicon, but that inflectional morphology is the result of syntactic operations.

**word-and-paradigm** A class of morphological theories that assumes morphemes do not exist. They assume only words are stored in the lexicon and that different word forms of every word are associated with different parts of a paradigm.

**zero derivation** An analysis of **conversion** that assumes it is derived with null affixes.

## References

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