

Words and their relations

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I summarize a very selective set of phenomena involving morphology, understood broadly as (i) the internal structure of words; (ii) the relations between words/wordforms ('lexical relatedness'), including paradigm structure; (iii) the relationship between word(form)s and syntax (ignoring the interfaces with phonology, semantics, pragmatics). Point (iii) leads back to (i) when we consider (iv) multiword expressions (MWEs) with morphological functions.

(i) S R Anderson argues that words are **a-morphous** (cf Stump, proponents of word-and-pattern morphology), though there are arguments that words at least consist of **morphs** (Crysmann & Bonami 2016). This raises a several questions: how do we guarantee the right segmentation? how does the grammar determine morph-ordering inside words?

(ii) There has been much discussion of the structure of inflectional paradigms, including well-established cases of diachronically robust **morphomic** (i.e. purely morphological) patterns (Maiden's 'N', 'L', 'U' patterns in Romance conjugation). A neglected type of within-paradigm relatedness is that of the **transpositions**, e.g. deverbal participles, which play an important role in morphosyntax and in language change. Their significance for synchronic models is that they represent an instance in which the inflectional paradigm of a word (verb) includes an inflection paradigm from another part of speech (adjective).

(iii) **Periphrastic constructions** often fill cells in otherwise synthetic inflectional paradigms, and typically show a mismatch between the features of those cells and the features which the individual word forms express in isolation. This motivates a distinction between **m-features/s-features** (Sadler & Spencer 2001) or **FORM/CONTENT paradigms** (Stump 2002, 2016). For example, for nearly all English verbs three distinct CONTENT/s-features, [TENSE:pst], [PTCP:prf], [PTCP:pass] each map onto the same (morphomic) FORM/m-feature, [VFORM:ed]. I illustrate with the Russian verb system. The implications of this dichotomy are only just being explored.

(iv) The functional lexemes in periphrases and other MWEs often undergo phonological reduction to clitics thence to affixes, but typically with partial/incomplete grammaticalization, leading to indeterminacy in the morphological structures, bringing us back to the issues raised under point (i). Such morphologization also gives rise to purely morphomic word forms, with multiple functions that can't be unified. Thus, the Russian past tense is expressed by a form ('l-participle') that still agrees as though it were a predicative adjective, not a verb, but it also expresses conditional mood with the particle *by*. (The Hindi-Urdu future even shows category mixing within the word itself, Spencer 2007.) Similarly, incomplete grammaticalization is, if anything, the norm with clitic systems. Points (i-iv) are all relevant to the fate of the participle system of Slavic, and particularly that of the l-participle. I briefly sketch the kinds of morphosyntactic systems that can arise from participles.

The overall picture of morphology, lexical relatedness and the morphology-syntax interface which emerges is one which matches very well the word \leftrightarrow phonology interface described in recent work by Bickel and colleagues: while it's possible to identify sets of properties which we can broadly describe as 'lexical', 'morphological', 'syntactic' etc, these properties don't necessarily converge neatly onto a unified level of representation identifiable as 'the lexicon', 'the word', 'the phrase/sentence'. However, if we can define the complete set of fine-grained properties and these are sufficient to provide an adequate, explicit account of the grammatical structures, then it doesn't matter if those factorized properties fail to map onto a unique, non-overlapping traditional set of universal categories, even within a single language. Failure to appreciate the need to factorize coarse-grained categories is likely to lead to conceptual confusion and to pointless debate, akin to asking whether or not Pluto is 'really' a planet.