Linguistics 361: Morphology
Fall 2012

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Office Hours: Weds 2:45 to 3:45 and by appointment

The course website:

Is on Blackboard. All readings and assignments will be available from Blackboard. I will also post lectures, handouts, and miscellany to the website after class sessions.

Labs and projects should be turned out by being uploaded to Blackboard in .pdf format, unless the instructions for the lab specifically say otherwise.

Class Location: This class will meet in Annenberg 101.

Disclaimer: This is not the final syllabus. It will be updated soon after I understand the preparation and goals of everyone in the class. It may be updated during the quarter in the light of progress on two big projects in experimental and computational morphology that are going in my lab.

I will announce any changes in class, and the most recent version of the course schedule will always be available on the course website.

Morphology is: The theory of relationships amongst words in the lexicon. The theory of how words are formed from meaningful parts.

Course Objectives: To explore...

The lexicon as a locus for associating the forms of words with their meanings.

The principles that enable to identify meaningful parts of words and recombine them to make new words.
Similarities and differences in morphological systems across languages.

Current experimental and quantitative methods for investigating morphology.

**Coverage/Course Schedule:**

**Decomposition:** (3 weeks)

- Finding meaningful parts in words.
- Phonological and semantic constraints on morphemes.
- Regular and irregular morphology
- Inflectional versus derivational morphology
- Allomorphic variation.

**Productivity** (3 weeks)

- Phonological and semantic conditions on productivity
- Lexical gangs
- Storage versus on-line creation.
- Wugs experiments

- Gradient models of morphology in cognitive science.

**Change** (3 weeks)

- Endogenous (internal) and exogeneous (external) causes of change
- Grammaticalization theory
- Analogical pressure
- Frequency effects at the historical time scales.

Note: This course will meet during WCAS Reading Week.

**Required Reading**

This course is oriented towards the current state of research. The textbook is recommended as a unified reference for theories of morphology:

The main thrust of the course will be based on current journal articles. These will total approximately 50 pages per week and will be posted on Blackboard.

**Warning:** Because this course can count as a distribution course, students occasionally enroll who do not have the interest or background to process the contradictory information and unsolved questions found in research literature. If this is your situation, you will probably find one of the department 200 levels to meet your needs better.

**Example Readings:**


**Requirements**

1. *Reading Assignments:* You should do each assigned reading at least once before
the date listed on the syllabus. You are responsible for material from the reading, even if it is not covered in class. Thus, if you find you do not fully understand the reading, it is your responsibility to ask about it in class or office hours. Time will be set aside in class for taking questions about the reading.

2. Class Attendance and Participation: The reading will not provide all the background to do the assignments work. You must come to every class and participate. Otherwise you will have difficulty identifying the take-away points from the reading, and will have difficulty with the practical aspects of the assignments.

I accept the use of laptops in class to directly further the goals of that class (e.g. to search an on-line dictionary for relevant example, take notes, or try out an experimental paradigm). I don't accept using laptops in class to log in to Facebook, read email, or do your shopping.

3. Problem Sets and Labs:

We will start with one problem set (posted on Blackboard and due before the next class), just to warm up and let me verify the kind of background people have.

After that, there will be 4 labs, which will be assigned as we cover the relevant material. Some labs require organizing the class to run an experiment. In this case, the lab will have two deadlines for turning in work. Before the first deadline, everyone will run one or two subjects and turn in the responses. Then, everyone will analyze the whole dataset.

5. Final Paper: There is no final exam for this course. There is a final paper, for which there is a choice of format.

1) A fake research paper

In a fake research paper, you will adopt the theoretical stance in one of recent papers we have studied. Showing your clear grasp of the position of the author, including their grounds for opposing their main competitors, you will fabricate a set of data originating in an "alternate reality" that tends to support their position. For example, you can run an experiment in an alternative reality under which the Etruscans beat off the Latin invaders, or in which Americans of the future have capabilities for space exploration.
You will write up this data in the format of a journal article, including an explanation of how the data were (ostensibly) collected and why the data cannot readily be explained by competing theories.

2) A real research paper

Anyone having, or contemplating, a research project that relates to word structure or word formation should use this opportunity to analyze real data, instead of fake data. Please notify me ASAP if you already know you are such a person.

3) Team projects

Because there are so many people enrolled in the course, I am strongly interested in having some team projects instead of individual projects. I will provide more details about this option after I understand more about the students enrolled.

The completed final paper is due on the last day of exam period, and this deadline is absolute and final, barring a medical excuse that would justify an Incomplete.

**Grading**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Problem Sets and Research Exercises**</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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</tbody>
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Total 100%

Problem Sets and Research Exercises will be weighted according to their complexity and the amount of time allocated to complete them.

The grading scale is the same for undergraduate and graduate students. Letter grades are assigned according to the following principles:

A: Stellar performance in every regard, showing a full command of the material and an ability to apply it in novel ways. Full participation in class and generosity in helping students who may have less preparation for the class.
B: Mastery of the major ideas of the course. Regular class attendance. Prompt, clear and legible assignments.
C: Turned in all the required work, but revealed some significant difficulties in the command of the material that would absolutely need to be remedied before attempting a research project that builds on the course.
D: Sporadic attendance and incomplete work.
Academic integrity

As with all courses at Northwestern University, registration in this course requires adherence to the University's principles regarding academic integrity (http://www.northwestern.edu/provost/students/integrity/principles.html). Suspected violations of academic integrity in this course will be immediately referred to the WCAS Assistant Dean for Advising and Academic Integrity. For details on procedures for handling suspected violations of academic integrity:

http://www.weinberg.northwestern.edu/advising/integrity/violations.html

You are encouraged to talk to other students while working on labs. However, once you have figured out the main ideas, you should write up the work independently. The writeup should be in your own words and should demonstrate your own understanding of the ideas.

Notice to students with disabilities

Any student with a documented disability requesting accommodations is required to speak directly to the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (Evanston campus: 847-467-5530; Chicago campus: 312-503-4042) preferably within the first two weeks of class. All discussions will remain confidential. For more information:

http://www.northwestern.edu/disability/

Late Assignments: Turn in work on time. The main points of assignments will be discussed in the class immediately following the submission deadline. Writeups received after the assignment has been discussed in class will receive severely reduced credit, if any. If you have a legitimate excuse for not turning in work on time (serious illness or family emergency), you must request an extension BEFORE the assignment is due.

Languages we know:

Spanish
Welsh
Latin
Greek