Morphology II

1. Morpho(pho)nology: Morphs, Morphemes and Allomorphs

- Morphonology is concerned with the interface between morphology and phonology, and more specifically with the question how morphemes are realized in different phonological contexts.
- Morphemes often occur in different variants: in this case we speak of different allomorphs realizing a single morpheme. Allomorphs are really morphs, but in order to stress that a group of morphs belong to one morpheme the term ‘allomorph’ is used.
- Allomorphs are phonologically, lexically or grammatically conditioned.

1.1 Phonological conditioning: the English plural morpheme

(1) verbs, bets, kisses

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morpheme  \{PLURAL\}  \{-z/ \-
/ -s/ \-
/ -ız/ \}
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- the phonological form of the stem determines the form of the suffix:
  /-z/  after vowels and voiced consonants which are not sibilants
  /-s/  after voiceless consonants which are not sibilants
  /-ız/  after /z/, /s/, /ʃ/, /θ̝/, /ʃθ̝/, /θıʃ/ (sibilants)

- formal representation of the rule:
  (2) \{-z\} → \{-ız\} \slash \{/z/, /s/, /ʃ/, /θ̝/, /θıʃ/\} \_
  \{-z\} → \{-s\} \slash \{[voiceless]\} \_
  \{-z\} → \{-ız\} \slash \{[voiced]\} \_

- phonological conditioning of allomorphs is the most regular and most frequent type of allomorphy
- another example: the negative prefix in impossible, incredible, inactive, illogical, irreverent

Exercise 2: Form the plural of the following nouns and assign them to one of the three classes described above. Justify your decision! hat, judge, interaction, country, hiss, class, rabbit, fear, slay, strack, spish

1.2 Lexical (morphological) conditioning: the plural again

(3) a. ox  ox-en  *ox-es
    b. mouse  mice  *mouse-s
2. Word formation

**word formation** (the creation of new lexemes)

- derivation
- compounding
- other types

(see last handout!)

2.1 Compounding

- A compound is the combination of two or more free roots that are considered one word (see the criteria for wordhood on the last handout)
- Compounds carry only **one** primary stress (on the first element):

(4) a. bláckbird - bláck bird
b. White House - white house
c. Énglish teacher - English Teacher

- **endocentric** compounds: represent a special case of the **head** of the compound:
  - darkroom, daylight, waterbed, bedroom, small talk
- **exocentric** compounds: compound has a meaning different from that of its components: egghead, blockhead, birdbrain, paperback

2.2 Other types of word formation

2.2.1 Blend

- two free words are combined and blended, usually by clipping off the end of the first word and the beginning of the second word
(5) \( sm(oke) + (f)og \rightarrow smog \)

2.2.2 Back formation

- speakers derive a morphologically simple word from a form which they analyze, on the basis of derivational and inflectional patterns in English, as a morphologically complex word:
(6) typewriter > typewrite

2.2.3 Clipping

- part of a word is dropped while the meaning is retained:
(7) rehab < rehabilitation

2.2.4 Acronym

- the initial letters of words in a phrase are pronounced as one word
(8) AIDS < acquired immune deficiency syndrome
(9) NATO < North Atlantic Treaty Organization

Assignment 1: Exercise 4.9 (2)
Relevant Reading: Brinton 82-86; 93-94; 97-101.
Optional reading: Brinton, rest of ch. 4.
Preparation for next week: Brinton 118-124 (obligatory)