

Morphology- Fall 2014

Time: Tuesday & Thursday, 3.30-5

Professor: Neil Myler

Office: 621 Commonwealth Ave
Room B08

Location: KCB 104

Email: myler@bu.edu

Office hours: Monday 3.30-5 & Wednesday
11-12.30; or by appointment

Course website: Blackboard Learn

Course objectives:

What is a word? Do the things we put spaces around when we write correspond to anything in our mental grammars? How does morphology relate to phonology, and to other areas of grammar, such as syntax and semantics? To what extent do the principles governing the structures and forms of words need to be boxed off from other areas of grammar, and to what extent are they symptomatic of deeper principles which hold of the language faculty as a whole? This course aims to answer these and other questions by examining morphological phenomena from across the world's languages, including English and languages which are (at least superficially) very different from it.

Prerequisites for the course:

CAS LX 250 Introduction to Linguistics (or equivalent), or permission of the instructor.

Students completing the course will learn:

- To identify the meaningful subparts of words and perform morphological analysis on unfamiliar languages
- To understand the major morphological phenomena found in the world's languages
- To analyze morphological and phonological patterns in particular languages, and their interactions
- To represent morphosyntactic structure diagrammatically, and comprehend the relationship between such structure and meaning
- To show an understanding of major theoretical issues surrounding how the components of the human language faculty fit together (i.e., *the architecture of the grammar*), and the role played by the study of morphology in addressing those issues

Required Reading (Available at Barnes and Noble in Kenmore Square):

The main textbook for this course, which we will read almost in its entirety, is the following:

- Harley, Heidi. 2006. *English Words: A Linguistic Introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell.

In addition, there will occasionally be readings from other sources- all of these will be posted in pdf form to Blackboard.

Note that the textbook is just the foundation of this course, not the totality of it, and that *you cannot pass this course by reading the textbook alone*. Regular attendance in class is therefore essential- see below on class procedures.

Course Requirements and grading:

- Class participation (10%)
- 9 Assignments (40%)
- Midterm examination (20%)
- Final examination (30%)

Class participation will be assessed on the basis of your attendance record and your level of participation in class discussions/in-class exercises.

The Assignments will be a mixture of linguistic problem-solving (i.e., applying analytical techniques and skills learned in class to unfamiliar linguistic data) and short-answer critical thinking questions.

Both the Midterm and the Final examinations will be a mixture of multiple choice, problem-solving and short-answer questions. The Final will not be cumulative, in the sense that pre-Midterm material will not be tested directly on the Final. However, post-Midterm material builds heavily on conceptual foundations built in the first half of the course.

Course policies:

Copyright. All materials used in this course are copyrighted. This is obvious in the case of the textbook readings, **but it also holds of my lecture slides, exercises, and other materials**. Reproducing class materials, or uploading them to websites, is a copyright infringement.

New assignments are posted to Blackboard on Thursday mornings, and are due on the following Thursday. Completed assignments are to be printed out and turned in at the beginning of Thursday class. Email submission is not permitted unless you are unable to attend class for some valid reason.

Late assignments are not accepted, except under relevant extenuating circumstances.

Please let me know of any unavoidable absences, whether for religious, personal, or health reasons, as soon as you become aware of them. If you know you will be observing one or more religious holidays this semester, please examine the syllabus to determine which class days you will need to miss, and let me know by email as soon as possible. I will work with you to help you catch up on missed work, in accordance with BU's policy on religious absences:

(<http://www.bu.edu/academics/policies/absence-for-religious-reasons/>)

No make-up exams will be granted, unless compelling personal, religious, or medical reasons force you to miss an examination and you have my permission in advance. The decision to grant or refuse a make-up exam is mine. Every effort will be made to accommodate a make-up exam in the event of a religious absence.

Procedures. Class time will be used to reinforce, practice, and extend material found in the readings. As well as new material, classes will often involve group exercises designed to reinforce the more difficult concepts.

Classroom etiquette. No cell phones. Laptops are to be used only for taking notes. Even so, you might be better off leaving your laptop at home and taking hand-written notes:

<http://www.vox.com/2014/6/4/5776804/note-taking-by-hand-versus-laptop>

Extra credit exercises will be granted only at my discretion and, if granted at all, will be made available to the whole class in the form of additional “bonus” sections of assignments or exams.

Academic Integrity. All students are responsible for understanding and complying with the BU Academic Conduct Code, available at:

<http://www.bu.edu/cas/students/undergraduate/academic-conduct-code/>

Collaboration. If you decide to form a study group to work together on assignments, your collaboration should not go beyond discussing ideas together. In other words, **you must write up your own assignment separately from the group, using only your own words** (except when quoting other work directly, in which case use citations as standard).

The following are all **banned forms of collaboration**:

- Having one member of the group produce a “group draft”, or “group essay plan”, which individual members of the group then customize.
- Writing up on separate computers while conferring with each other in real time (whether in person or via skype, chat services, or any other medium).
- Using another student's complete assignment as a reference when completing your own.

Furthermore, **when assignments are problem-set-based rather than essay-based, I encourage you to try to work alone**, at least at first. Otherwise, it will be hard for you to tell how much you've really understood.

Grading standards:

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93-100	A	78-79.99	C+
90-92.99	A-	73-77.99	C
88-89.99	B+	70-72.99	C-
83-87.99	B	60-60.99	D
80-82.99	B-	< 60	F

Course Overview (subject to change- any updates will be posted to Blackboard)

Week	Topic	Readings	Deadlines
Dates			
Week 1 Tuesday, Sept 2	Introduction <i>Course overview & logistics</i> <i>Why morphology?</i>	<i>Harley Ch 1 & 4</i>	
Thursday, Sept 4	The notion “word” <i>What is a word?</i> <i>Identifying the pieces of words</i>		
Week 2 Tuesday, Sept 9	Derivational morphology <i>The derivation vs. inflection</i> <i>distinction- valid or not?</i> <i>Roots and affixes</i> <i>Structure and meaning in words</i> <i>Introduction to realization rules</i> <i>and allomorphy</i>	<i>Harley Ch 5 & 6</i>	
Thursday, Sept 11	<i>Derivational morphology cont.</i>		Assignment 1 Due (wordhood and morphological analysis)

Week 3 Tuesday, Sept 16	Inflectional morphology <i>Major types of inflection</i> <i>More realization rules and allomorphy</i> <i>Scope, introduction to the Mirror Principle</i>		
Thursday, Sept 18	<i>Inflectional morphology cont.,</i>		Assignment 2 Due (derivational morphology; tree-drawing)
Week 4 Tuesday, Sept 23	Introducing Phonology <i>IPA refresher</i> <i>Phonological rules</i> <i>Underlying forms and surface forms</i> <i>Rule ordering</i>	<i>Harley Ch 2</i>	
Thursday, Sept 25	<i>Phonology cont.</i>		Assignment 3 Due (inflectional morphology; allomorphy; scope)
Week 5 Tuesday, Sept 30	Phonological Words and the Prosodic Hierarchy <i>Possible and impossible phonological words</i> <i>Syllable structure</i> <i>Phonotactics in English and other Languages</i> <i>The prosodic hierarchy</i>	<i>Harley Ch 3</i>	
Thursday, Oct 2	<i>Phonological words and the prosodic hierarchy cont.</i>		Assignment 4 (phonology problem sets; rules and rule ordering)
Week 6 Tuesday, Oct 7	Phonologically Conditioned Allomorphy <i>Phonologically-conditioned suppletive allomorphy (PCSA) vs. pure phonology</i> <i>Typological generalizations concerning PCSA and the order of spell-out</i>	<i>Reread Harley section 6.3</i>	

Thursday, Oct 9	The division of labor between allomorphy and phonological rules <i>“Readjustment” rules and semi-irregular forms</i> <i>Practice distinguishing true allomorphy from the action of regular phonology</i>		Assignment 5 (phonological words and phonotactics); Practice Midterm Released
Week 7 Tuesday, Oct 14	NO CLASS- BU ON A MONDAY SCHEDULE		
Thursday, Oct 16	Midterm review <i>Come prepared with questions based on the practice midterm</i>		No assignment due-work through practice midterm before class
Week 8 Tuesday, Oct 21	In-Class Midterm		
Thursday, Oct 23	Midterm Discussion <i>Discussion of midterm and consolidation of pre-midterm concepts</i>		No assignment due-break for midterm
Week 9 Tuesday, Oct 28	Prosodic Morphology <i>Reduplication</i> <i>Infixation</i>		
Thursday, Oct 30	<i>Root and pattern morphology</i>		Assignment 6 Due (the prosodic hierarchy; PCSA; “Division of Labor” problems)
Week 10 Tuesday, Nov 4	Lexical semantics <i>Content meanings vs. grammatical meanings</i> <i>Entailments</i> <i>Semantic webs</i> <i>Introduction to argument structure</i>	<i>Harley Ch 7</i>	
Thursday, Nov 6	<i>Lexical Semantics cont.</i>		Assignment 7 Due (Prosodic Morphology)

Week 11 Tuesday, Nov 11	Morphology and Argument Structure <i>Argument structure-changing morphology</i> <i>The sensitivity of morphology to syntactic argument structure</i> <i>The Mirror Principle redux</i> <i>Morphology and the syntactic structure of verb phrases</i>	<i>Muysken 1981 (up to page 309)</i>	
Thursday, Nov 13	<i>Morphology and argument structure cont.</i>		Assignment 8 Due (Lexical semantics and argument structure)
Week 12 Tuesday, Nov 18	The Acquisition of Morphology <i>Learning biases</i> <i>Overgeneralization and undergeneralization</i> <i>The Wug test</i>	<i>Harley Ch 8;</i> <i>Berko 1958</i>	
Thursday, Nov 20	<i>Acquisition cont.</i>	<i>Start reading Greenberg 1963 for next week</i>	Assignment 9 Due (Argument structure, acquisition)
Week 13 Tuesday, Nov 25	Morphology and Typology <i>Traditional morphological taxonomies</i> <i>The suffixing preference</i> <i>Formal and functional explanations</i>	<i>Greenberg 1963;</i> <i>Hall 1992 Ch 2</i>	
Thursday, Nov 27	NO CLASS- THANKSGIVING		
Week 14 Tuesday, Dec 2	Morphology and Psycholinguistics <i>The past tense debate</i>	<i>Pinker 1999 Ch 4;</i> <i>Embick and Marantz 2005</i>	Practice Final Released
Thursday, Dec 4	<i>Psycholinguistics continued</i>		No assignment due (work on practice final)
Week 15 Tuesday, Dec 9	Final Review <i>Come prepared with questions based on the practice final</i>		No assignment due-work through practice final in advance.

Thursday, Dec 18	FINAL EXAM 3pm-5pm		
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Course Bibliography

Berko, Jean. 1958. The child's learning of English morphology. *Word* 14:150-177.

Embick, David and Alec Marantz. 2005. Cognitive neuroscience and the English past tense: Comments on the paper by Ullman et al. *Brain and Language* 93:243-247.

Greenberg, Joseph. 1963. Some universals of grammar with particular reference to the order of meaningful elements. Reprinted in Roberts, Ian (ed.) 2006. *Comparative Grammar Vol. 1*. London, Routledge.

Hall, Christopher. 1992. *Morphology and Mind*. London: Routledge.

Harley, Heidi. 2006. *English Words: A Linguistic Introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Muysken, Pieter. 1981. Quechua word structure. In F. Heny (ed.) *Filters and Binding*. pp. 279-329. London: Longmans.

Pinker, Steven. 1999. *Words and Rules: The Ingredients of Language*. New York: Harper.