Inflection vs. Derivation

Morphology

AS/SLL/JU

Lets begin with LEXEME

- **A lexeme** is a theoretical construct that corresponds roughly to one of the common senses of the term word. Examples
  - include BOOK, EAT, DARK, SECRETLY
- It is a sign or set of signs that exists independently of any particular syntactic context.

LEXEME

- It has a particular meaning or grammatical function (e.g., 'a set of written or printed pages fastened along one side and encased between two covers'; 'consume, as with food').
- Some linguists restrict the class of lexemes to the major lexical categories of noun, verb, adjective/adverb.

LEXEME

- It is generally referred to by its citation form (e.g., • BOOK, EAT),
- but its shape may vary systematically according to the syntactic context in which it is used
- (e.g., one book, two books; I am eating right now, I ate a big dinner yesterday).

Inflection vs. derivation

- Inflection involves the formation of grammatical forms – past, present, future; singular, plural; masculine, feminine, neuter; and so on – of a single lexeme.
- Thus is, are, and being are examples of inflected forms of the lexeme be, which happens to be highly irregular not only in English, but in many other languages as well.

Contd..

- Regular verb lexemes in English have a lexical stem, which is the bare form with no affixes (e.g., select) and three more inflected forms, one each with the suffixes -s, -ed, and -ing (selects, selected, and selecting).

Examples

- Examples of words + inflectional morphemes
- Nouns: wombat + s
- ox + en
- Verbs: brainwash + es
- dig + s
- escape + d
- rain + ing

Derivation

- **Derivation involves the** creation of one lexeme from another, such as selector or selection from select.
- **Compounding is a special type of derivation**, since it involves the creation of one lexeme from two or more other lexemes.

Examples

- Examples of words + derivational affixes
- Nouns to nouns: New York + ese
  - fish + ery
  - Boston + ian
  - auto + biography
  - vice + president
- Verbs to verbs:
  - un + tie

Examples

- Adjectives to adjectives:
  - gray + ish
  - a + moral
  - sub + human
  - il + legible
- Nouns to adjectives:
  - hawk + ish
  - poison + ous
  - soul + ful
  - iron + like
  - Verbs to nouns:
    - discombobulat + ion
    - acquitt + al
    - digg + er
- Adjectives to adverbs:
  - sad + ly
  - efficient + ly
  - Readers will come across the terms

Classic differences

from Goldberg 2005

inflection	derivation
adds information	changes information
doesn't change word class	(often) changes WC
peripheral	central (Greenberg #28, Bybee 1985)
productive (but Chechen agr in only 30% of vbs)	less productive; frequent gaps in family
paradigmatic	not paradigmatic
semantically transparent ("compositional")	not always semantically transparent ("non-compositional")
connected to syntax	not connected to syntax
not replaceable by single word	replaceable by single word
can be syncretic (3sg pres -s)	not as syncretic? (un-talk-ative)
obligatory (those book*(s))	optional (work(er)), chimney sweep?
not iterable	iterable

Conclusions

- Ample evidence for empirical differences in behavior of Inflection vs. Derivation.
- Problems with observed I-D differences:
  - may have historical rather than synchronic causes
  - may have extra-linguistic causes
    - e.g. semantic transparency, R brain function…
  - not clear to me that anything is going on beyond the lexical vs grammatical distinction reflected in the syntactic tree

How to get the I-D distinction?

- **brute force** (e.g. LPM)
  - morphemes pre-classified as D or I; properties are predetermined
- **stratification** (e.g. Anderson, Amorphous Morph)
  - derivation done in the lexicon
  - inflection done in the syntax
- **syntactic** (Lieber, Selkirk, Travis, DM)
  - single domain of word-formation where both I and D apply
  - properties of morphemes derived from structural configuration (← conceptual representation) and relative position
- **no empirical motivation for I/D distinction:**
  - Lieber 1980, Di Sciullo and William 1987:69ff, Bochner 1992:12ff
  - "derivation and inflection are not kinds of morphology but rather uses of morphology: inflection is the morphological realization of syntax, while derivation is the morphological realization of lexeme formation" (Aronoff 1994:126) [cf. Anderson above]

Lexicon

- The word lexicon is from Greek lexikós ‘pertaining to words’ and often designates a book containing a list of words in a language along with their definitions.
- It refers to the mental dictionary

Views

- According to one, the lexicon is a list of the indivisible morphological units, or morphemes, in a language. 1845 in Radzymin, Poland; d. 1929 in Warsaw)
- The **second view of the lexicon**, due more or less to Bloomfield (1933), is a list of irregular or arbitrary forms. Because they are irregular or arbitrary, they must be memorized.

Views

- For example, a speaker of French must learn that the sound sequence [arbr] refers to a tree, and a speaker of English must learn that the word slide refers to a small square object that we put in a slide projector to project an image onto a screen or wall.

Views

- One morphologically complex word that must be considered to be listed in the lexicon is **representative.**
- The lexicon contains more than words. Affixes, such as English re-, can be assumed to be in the lexicon. Speakers know and understand such affixes and readily attach them to new stems.

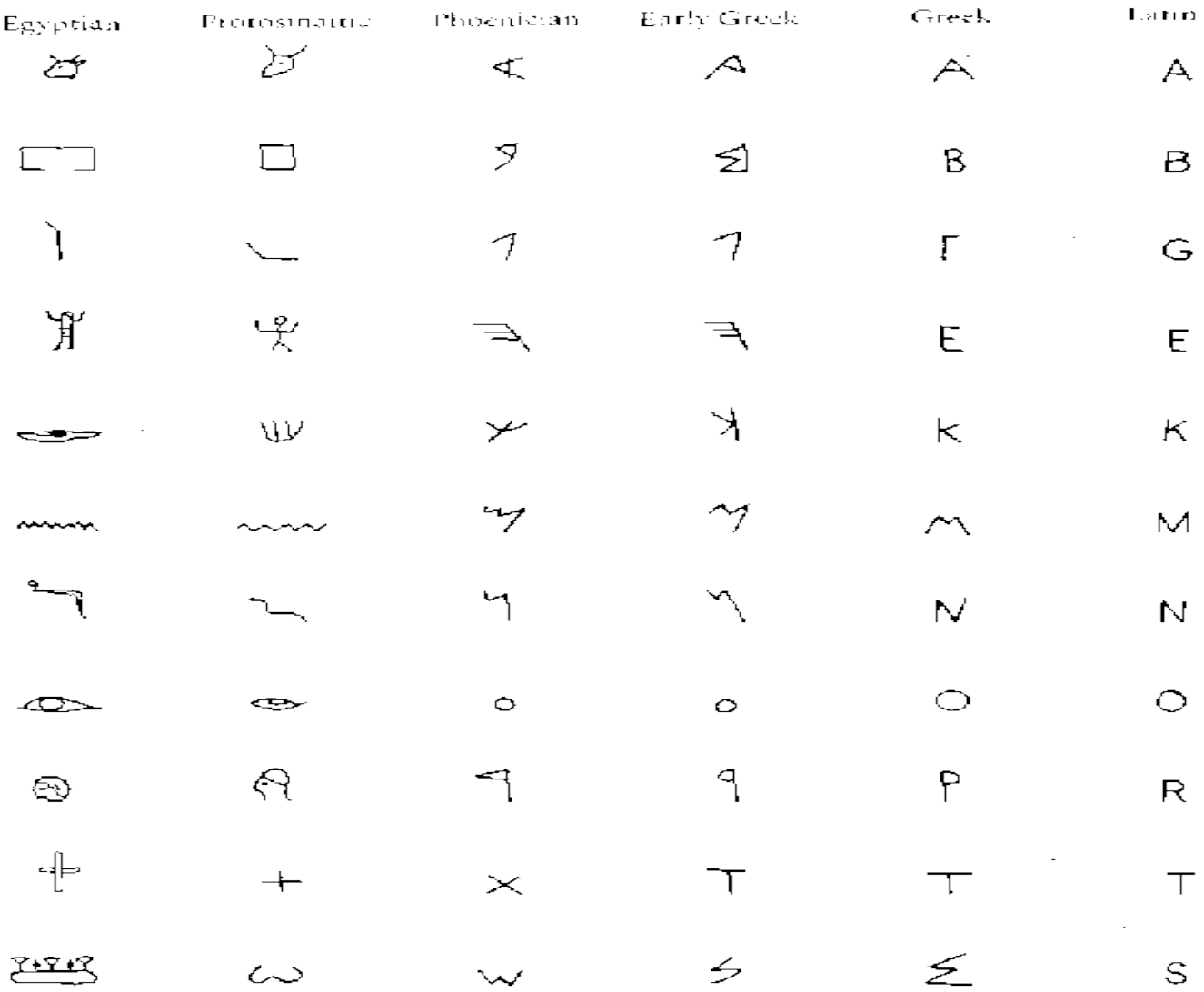
Views

- Some affixed inflected forms, like says, must also be in a lexicon. We know this because says is an exception to the general rule.
- We have established the need to list inflected forms and complex lexemes like representative in the lexicon. We need to list some compounds, too.

Views

- **A third use of lexicon** among linguists is to equate the lexicon with the morphological component of the grammar as a whole.
- Aronoff believes that the mental dictionary should be considered separately from the internal mechanisms involved in the formation and analysis of words

End or begin ☺


Egyptian
Proto-sinaitic
Phoenician
Early Greek
Greek
Latin
A
B
G
E
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S