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New trends in morphology

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Introduction

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This thematic issue includes a selection of articles from the first International Symposium of Morphology (*ISM0*) held in Lille (France) in December 2017. The six articles gathered in this issue provide a good overview of what is currently being done in morphology to the extent that they present a great variety of languages, topics and theoretical frameworks. In what follows, we discuss each one of these points briefly before providing a short summary of the articles.

The languages analysed in the present issue are typologically very diverse, with six different vocal languages and one signed language. The vocal languages under study are Occitan (L. Esher), Benabena, a Trans-New Guinea language spoken in Papua-New Guinea (B. Crysman), English and Japanese (M. Shimada & A. Nagano) French (F. Villoing), and, more indirectly, Greek (M. Voga & A. Anastassiadis-Symeonidis). The signed language described here is the French Sign Language (FSL). Half of the studies presented adopt a comparative perspective: English and Japanese for M. Shimada & A. Nagano, the lexicon of visuo-gestual languages vs. signed languages, of which the FSL is an example, for Y. Sennikova & B. Garcia. As for the article by M. Voga & A. Anastassiadis-Symeonidis it deals with the interrelationship between the Greek and French lexicons of bilingual people.

In addition to the diversity of languages, the articles presented in this issue show a great diversity of topics and approaches. They concern inflection (L. Esher, B. Crysman) or derivation (in particular F. Villoing, M. Voga & A. Anastassiadis-Symeonidis) and deal with phonology (L. Esher, B. Crysman), syntax (M. Shimada & A. Nagano), semantics (F. Villoing), the lexicon (Y. Sennikova & B. Garcia) and psycholinguistics (M. Voga & A. Anastassiadis-Symeonidis). Yet, some connections can be established between some articles. For instance, those by L. Esher and B. Crysman both focus on the structure of verbal paradigms. The articles by Y. Sennikova & B. Garcia and M. Voga & A. Anastassiadis-Symeonidis, raise the same types of questions, although the kinds of lexicon they study are very different (monolingual LSF lexicon vs. bilingual French/Greek lexicon): how is the lexicon organised? what type of units should be distinguished? These questions are very

topical, whether they concern inflectional paradigms or the organisation of the lexicon, and give rise to an abundant literature (see for instance Bonami (2014), Stump (2016) for inflectional paradigms; Hathout (2009), Gader, Koehl & Polguère (2014) for the organisation of the lexicon).

Finally, the present issue shows various theoretical frameworks and methods. While most studies described in the articles are carried out within the Lexemic Morphology (L. Esher, F. Villoing), other frameworks are represented, such as Information-based Morphology (B. Crysmann) or Distributed Morphology (M. Shimada & A. Nagano). Methods also differ among the articles: some studies are based on corpora (F. Villoing, Y. Sennikova & B. Garcia), while others are based on psycholinguistic experiments (M. Voga & A. Anastassiadis-Symeonidis).

As the articles gathered in this issue are very diverse regarding languages, topics, theories and methods, they are a good reflection of the openness that drives current research in morphology. A short summary of each one is given below.

The first two articles concern inflectional morphology and focus on the structure of verbal paradigms in different languages.

In her article “Implicational relationships between desinences in Occitan imperfect and conditional forms”, **Louise Esher** analyses the verbal paradigm in different varieties of Occitan by focusing on the conditional and the imperfect indicative forms. Most Occitan varieties have systematic identity between the conditional forms of all lexemes and the imperfect indicative forms of non-first-conjugation verbs. The author discusses the implicational relationships between the two series of forms and questions the morphomic (metamorphomic in her terms) organisation of the verbal paradigm. She first presents the shared origin, stemming from Latin, of both conditional and imperfect indicative forms, which explains their current identity as they have undergone the same sound changes. She then analyses three cases of diachronic analogical change and shows that each change that occurs in one series of desinences (either conditional or imperfect indicative) also affects the other, thus preserving the identity between the two series. She concludes that there seems to be strong implicational relationships between the two series of cells and she proposes to analyse this type of implicational relationships as a new kind of morphomic object: while established Romance morphemes consist of implicational relationships between the cells of individual paradigms, this new morphome is not visible within a single paradigm or inflection class but instead applies to multiple paradigms, in different conjugation classes.

The article by **Berthold Crysmann** “Patterns of allomorphy in Benabena: The case for multiple inheritance” deals with patterns of allomorphy in the conjugation of Benabena. In that language, primary verbs inflect according to three persons, three numbers, three tenses and three moods, and can have additional optional markers such as negation, emphasis, etc. They take both prefixal and suffixal markers and the segmentation of affixes is quite straightforward. However, both affixes and stems can undergo allomorphy. There are three systematic patterns of allomorphy in the conjugation of Benabena verbs: two Paninian splits, one opposing first and non-first persons, the other opposing first or singular persons and non-first non-singular persons; and one morphomic split, to the extent that it does not

correspond to a natural class, which singles out second person singular and first person plural. B. Crysmann provides an analysis of these allomorphic splits within the formal framework of Information-based Morphology which relies on a hierarchy of typed features structures with multiple inheritance. He shows that both Paninian and morphomic splits can be accounted for by means of multiple inheritance of types. By doing so, he demonstrates that morphomic features are unnecessary and suggests that we limit their use to lexical properties.

The article by **Masaharu Shimada** and **Akiko Nagano**, “Relational Adjectives Used Predicatively (But Not Qualitatively): A Comparative – Structural Approach”, focuses on issues at the boundary between syntax and morphology insofar as the authors (i) confront facts that are syntactic in English and morphological in Japanese, (ii) solve the problems posed by this confrontation within the theoretical framework of Distributed Morphology. Their article concerns relational adjectives that can be used in predicative sentences. For the authors, there are two types of predicative adjectives: truly predicative ones and those that remain relational, even in predicative use. The latter are the main focus of the study. Shimada & Nagano rely on previous work to show that an English relational adjective must obey two constraints to be stranded: it must be a classifying modifier of a complex common name and, in this context, denote a kind. There also exist non-qualitative predicative sentences in Japanese, but while in English the relational element is an adjective, it is a noun in Japanese. This noun is subject to the same constraints as the relational adjective in English: it must be a nominal predicate headed by a bound classifier to refer to kinds. Thus, according to the authors, Japanese nominal predicates are the equivalents of English stranded relational adjectives. The only difference lies in the linguistic means: they are syntactico-semantic in English vs. morphological in Japanese. In addition, the authors consider that, in both structures, predicative use is obtained by deletion of the noun. To demonstrate this, they rely on the work of Adger (2013), using the relation-denoting functional head ρ .

As mentioned above, **Florence Villoing's** article, “Stative verbs and French Verb-Noun compounds: a discreet preference”, lies at the border between two or even three domains: derivational morphology – and more precisely compounding –, semantics and, albeit indirectly, syntax. Indeed, the author shows that, contrary to what is often claimed, French VNs nominal compounds do not only use transitive action verbs to instantiate the V slot of the compound, but also stative ones. Yet, a stative verb must obey some constraints to be used within a compound. Building on the distinction made by Maienborn's (2005) between Kimian's and Davidsonian's states Villoing shows that: (i) static verbs that instantiate the V slot of the VN compounds are essentially hybrid verbs, i.e. verbs having properties of both stative and dynamic verbs; (ii) in their static use, these verbs are pure statives (Kimians's states); and (iii) the interpretation of the compound depends on the aspectual and syntactic properties of the verb: if it is dynamic, the compound denotes either an Agent or an Instrument, whereas if it is stative, it denotes an Experiencer or a Mean.

The two last articles focus, albeit in very different ways, on the structure of the lexicon. That by Yana Sennikova and Brigitte Garcia, “Statut et rôle des composants sublexicaux dans la structuration du lexique en langue des signes française (LSF)” (“Status and role of sublexical components in the structuration of the French Sign Language (FSL) lexicon’), as suggested by

its title, concerns the lexicon of the FSL. While that by Madeleine Voga and Anna Anastassiadis-Symeonidis, “Connecting lexica in bilingual cross-script morphological processing: base and series effects in language co-activation” concerns the lexicon of bilingual persons.

In their article, **Yana Sennikova** and **Brigitte Garcia** participate in the framework of research undertaken by Cuxac (Cuxac 1996, Cuxac 2000, Cuxac & Sallandre 2000) advocating for the autonomy of studies on signed languages compared to those on vocal languages. Trying to identify the signs that constitute the lexicon of signed languages, the authors take the opportunity to give a brief history of the emergence of issues related to the identification of units in the signed language lexicon. They show that, if the lexicon has word-signs more or less corresponding to the lexical units (LU) of vocal languages, it also consists of other types of signs that are only partially lexicalized. These signs, called “transfer units” (TU), form families of articulated signs from a sublexical nucleus, provided with a form and a meaning and consisting of two or three “parametric components”; the latter may be, for example, the placement of one of the two hands. TUs – like LUs, which would only be lexicalized TUs – are therefore significant units that can be decomposed into infra-lexical elements. This is indeed what can be shown by the experiments carried out on the basis of three complementary sets of data: a lexicographical corpus (*Dictionnaire bilingue LSF / français*), a subset of the *Creagest* corpus of FSL dialogues and a collection of FSL exchanges between deaf adults based on a set of tasks. Several families of signs are studied, and the data show that some infra-LU or infra-TU components are isolated to form new LUs. They also show that not all components have the same weight, and that some have a more structuring value than others. Such analyses question, and even reverse, the traditional bi-partition between a core-lexicon, constituted by LUs, and a non-core-lexicon, constituted by TUs. TUs are, for the authors, the fundamental, even universal, units of signed languages.

Madeleine Voga and **Anna Anastassiadis-Symeonidis** study the role of morphological information, both in terms of base and affix, in the architecture and organisation of the bilingual lexicon. To achieve this, they study the effect of cognates, i.e. “translation equivalents sharing a formal overlap, for instance *hotel* or *sport* in English, French and Dutch” (p. 161), on Greek/French bilinguals at an advanced level of L2 proficiency. Indeed, many studies have already shown that cognates play a role in the recognition of the translation in L2. The two authors carried out a lexical decision task experiment in which three categories of words suffixed by *ιστής* /*istís*/ ‘iste’ and *isme* were tested: transparent cognates in which the base and the suffix belong to both languages, non-transparent cognates for which there is no corresponding base in L1 (Greek) compared to L2 (French) – what the authors call “0-base cognates” –, and non-cognates. The experiments show that all categories produce priming effects. However, 0-base cognates and non-cognates do not induce translation effects but morphological effects, which involve morphological families and/or morphological series. The results suggest, according to the authors, that, (i) in the bilingual lexicon, the two languages are interconnected, and that, (ii) in the treatment of complex words, surface relationships – between constructed words, suffix series or bases of the same family – take precedence over the structure of complex words, i.e. over infra-lexical relationships. In that

respect, word families, which include morphological and derivational families, provide a fundamental principle of organisation in the bilingual mental lexicon.

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