LNGT0101
Introduction to Linguistics

Lingu-ist-ic-s
[lɪŋ-gʷí-stɪks]

Lecture #20
Nov 26th, 2012

Announcements

- HW5 is due on Wed (5pm by e-mail; in class for hard copy).
- I extended the original due date for the LAP report till Friday Dec 7th. Deadline: 12noon.
- A linguistics talk this week: **'The So-called Japanese Subject Marker -ga'** by Prof. Masako Hoye in Hillcrest 103 at 4:30pm.

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Language change

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So, do you guys speak English?

- Yes!
- And so did Shakespeare:
  A man may fish with the worm that hath eat of a king, and eat of the fish that hath fed of that worm.

- Translation?
  Not really!

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So, do you guys speak English?

- Yes! And so did <u>Chaucer</u>:
  *Whan that Aprille with his shoures soote
  The droght of March hath perced to the roote.*

- Translation?
  When April with its sweet showers
  The drought of March has pierced to the root.

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So, do you guys speak English?

- Yes! And so did the author of *Beowulf*:
  Wolde guman findan þone þe him on sweofote sare geteode.

- Translation?
  He wanted to find the man who harmed him while he slept.

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Languages change over time

- So, you get the obvious point: Languages do change over time.
- There are two main questions with regard to language change:
    - *First, why does a language change?*
    - *Second, how does a language change?*

- We talk about this today.

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A puzzle regarding language change

- Functionally, language change is problematic since it hinders communication.
- Socially, language change is also problematic, because it engenders negative stereotypes that could lead to discrimination.
- So, why would you do it?

Why do languages change?

- **External factors**: Technology. Migration and language contact. Borrowing. Social pressure/group identification. Extravaganza.
- **Internal factors**: Ease of articulation. Naturalness. Analogy.

Types of language change

- Language change happens in all areas of language: In the lexicon (lexical and semantic change) and in the grammar (phonological, morphological, and syntactic change).
- We discuss examples of each.

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Lexical change

- The lexicon of a language undergoes change in either one of two ways: "**word gain**" or "**word loss**".

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Word gain

- New words are always added to the lexicon of every language, almost on a daily basis. We have already seen in our discussion of word-formation that there are systematic word-formation processes that create new words and add them to the dictionary of every language:
    - *derivation, word coinage, conversion, clipping, blending, acronyms, borrowing and loan translations, compounding, back-formation, and eponyms*.

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Word loss

- So, Shakespeare used *beseem* (= to be suitable), *wot* (= to know), *fain* (= gladly).
- And technology might drive some words out of use, e.g., *buckboard, buggy, dogcart, hansom*, etc.

Two bits?

Iceboxes?

Word loss

- **Euphemisms** can also eventually lead to loss of words:
  - *lavatory, bathroom, restroom, lady's room/men's room*, etc.
- Hugh Rawson's *Dictionary of euphemisms and other doubletalk* includes:
  - 'act of God' for disaster
  - 'administrative assistant' for secretary
  - 'associate' for co-worker of a lower rank

Semantic change

- Language change may also take the form of changing the meanings of existing words. There are three such cases: ***broadening** (dog, bird)*, ***narrowing** (meat, girl, hound)*, and ***semantic shift***.
- Semantic shift may be a case of ***elevation*** (*knight*, *chivalrous*) or ***degradation*** (*lust*, *silly*).
- Keeping the system balanced: *mete*, *flǣsc*, and *foda*.

Morphological change

- Languages also change morphologically over time. And morphological rules may be lost, added, or changed.

Loss of morphology

- Latin had case markings on nouns. Romance languages do not have any of these today. Same thing happened with Arabic dialects.
- Old English (OE) actually did have case markings.

Se cniht	geaf	gief-e	þæs hierd-es	sun-e
the youth-NOM	gave	gift-ACC	the shepherd-GEN	son-DAT

'The youth gave a gift to the shepherd's son.'

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Case-marking in OE

Table 7.30 Old English case affixes

	Masculine		Neuter		Feminine	
Singular						
Nominative	hund	'dog'	dĕor	'animal'	gief	'gift'
Accusative	hund		dĕor		gief-u	
Genitive	hund-es		dĕor-es		gief-e	
Dative	hund-e		dĕor-e		gief-e	
Plural						
Nominative	hund-as		dĕor		gief-a	
Accusative	hund-as		dĕor		gief-a	
Genitive	hund-a		dĕor-a		gief-a	
Dative	hund-um		dĕor-um		gief-um	

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Loss of morphology in OE

Table 7.31 The loss of case affixes through sound change (in English *hound*)

	Old English	Middle English (e = [ə])	Modern English
Singular			
Nominative	hund	hund	hound
Accusative	hund	hund	hound
Genitive	hund-es	hund-(e)s	hound's
Dative	hund-e	hund-(e)	hound
Plural			
Nominative	hund-as	hund-(e)s	hounds
Accusative	hund-as	hund-(e)s	hounds
Genitive	hund-a	hund-(e)	hounds'
Dative	hund-um	hund-(e)	hounds

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Loss of morphology in OE

- The loss of the case system was compensated by the use of prepositions, particularly "to" for the dative, and "of" for the genitive. It also led to restrictions on word order, as we'll see later.

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Loss of derivational morphemes

- A derivational affix may be lost with or without remnants.
- The suffix -*t* was once used to derive nouns from verbs in English:

  draw → *draft*   *drive* → *drift*   *shove* → *shift*
- Compare with the suffix -*u* that formed nouns from adjectives, which has no remnant words today:

  menig "many" → *menigu "multitude"*

  eald "old"   → *ealdu "old age"*

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Adding rules: Borrowing of derivational affixes

- Latin –*bilis* was borrowed into English via French words (e.g., *change* → *changeable*). But it was afterwards also applied to native words, such as *wash* → *washable*.

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Grammaticalization

- *Grammaticalization* is a process whereby a lexical item acquires a grammatical function in the language:

  lexical morpheme → grammatical morpheme

Old English word		Modern English Suffix
hād	'state, condition, rank'	-hood (childhood)
dōm	'condition, power'	-dom (freedom)
(ge-)līc	'similar, equal, like'	-ly (fatherly)

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New affixes from "false" analysis

- New affixes may also arise from a *false analysis* of the morphological structure of words. The process is also called *folk etymology*:

  hamburger → *cheese**burger**, fish**burger**, chicken**burger***

  alcoholic → *work**aholic**, choc**aholic**, shop**aholic***

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CATHOLIC MEETING TODAY

5 minutes in Colin suddenly realised he had mis-read the sign.

www.beckellcomedian.com
9GAG.COM/GAG/5109802

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New affixes out of "nowhere"

- In some cases, there's no morphological structure at all, or at least not one that falls within the realm of English morphology:

  Watergate leads to *Irangate, Contragate*

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Extending affixes to new categories

- Sometimes, morphological change takes place when an affix is used with categories that it normally does not apply to, thereby deriving new words:

  -able in *objectionable*

  -ese in *motherese* and *journalese*

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Phonological change

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Phonological change

- Perhaps the most noticeable change in the grammar of a language happens in pronunciation.
- Phonological change is typically caused by the co-articulation processes that we talked about early in the year.

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What's going on here?

Old Spanish [semda] → Modern Spanish [senda] "path"
Early Latin [inpossiblis] → Late Latin [impossiblis]
Early OE [stefn]　　　→ Later OE [stemn] "stem"
Latin [octo] (c = k)　　→ Italian [otto]　　"eight"

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Assimilation: Nasalization

- Vowels may get nasalized before nasal consonants, followed by deletion of that nasal consonant (typically when it is final). This is how nasal vowels were created in French and Portuguese, e.g.,

Latin	Portuguese	French
bon-	bom [bõ]	bon [bɔ̃] "good"

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What's going on here?

Late Latin [amna] → Spanish [alma]　　"soul"
Latin [arbor]　　→ Spanish [arbol]　　"tree"
　　　　　　　　　　Italian [albero]
(but cf. French *arbre*).

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And here?

Earlier OE [ganra] → Late OE [gandra]　　"gander"
Latin [schola]　　→ Spanish [escuela]　　"school"

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How about here?

　Earlier OE *waps* → Late OE *wasp* "wasp"
　Earlier OE *þridda* → Late OE *þirdda* "third"
- Also at a distance:
　　Latin *mīrāculum* → Spanish *milagro*

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Vowel deletion

- A vowel may be deleted from a word, resulting in *apocope* (if the vowel is final) or *syncope* (if the vowel is medial):
- Apocope:
  Latin [ōrmáre] → French [orner] "decorate"

- Syncope:
  Latin [pérdere] → French [perdre] "lose"

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Vowel reduction

- Vowel deletion is frequently preceded by vowel reduction, where a vowel is reduced to schwa, followed by syncope or apocope, e.g.,

OE	MidE	Early ModE
stānas [a]	stones [ə]	stones [ø]
nama [a]	name [ə]	name [ø]

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Consonant deletion

- Consonants may also delete from a word giving rise to another instance of pronunciation change, e.g., Old and Middle English had [kn] and [gn], but the initial consonant underwent deletion.
- And of course French provides a great example of loss of word-final consonant deletion:
  gros   [gro] "large"
  chaud [ʃo]   "warm"

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Substitution

- Substitution involves the replacement of one segment with another similar-sounding segment:
  MidE [x] → ModE [f] in "laugh"
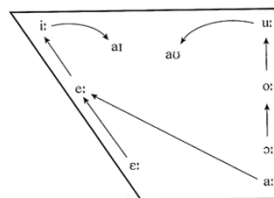 Standard English [θ] → Cockney [f] in "thin"

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Phonological Shift

- A phonological shift is a change in which a series of sounds is systematically modified so that their organization with respect to each other is altered.
- We have previously seen that with the *Northern Cities Vowel Shift*.
- A well known example of this phonological change is the so-called *Great Vowel Shift* (GVS) in the history of English, where the seven long vowels underwent a series of modifications between 1400-1600, as shown in the following table:

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A take-home pronunciation puzzle

please-pleasant
serene-serenity
sane-sanity
crime-criminal

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Next class agenda

- Presentation of Myth 21: America is ruining the English language.
- Syntactic change.
- Reconstructing dead languages: The comparative method. Read Chapter 11, pp. 509-518.

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