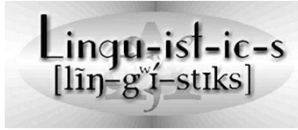


LNGT0101 INTRODUCTION TO LINGUISTICS



Lecture #21
Nov 19th, 2014

Announcements

- Any questions on HW 5?
- Any questions on the paper?

Transition and agenda

- Languages do change over time.
- Language change happens at all linguistic levels: lexical, semantic, morphological, syntactic, and phonological.
- Over time, changes can be so substantial that speakers of a given language would fail to understand earlier forms of that language (*Beowulf!*).

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Transition and agenda

- Last time we talked about lexical and semantic change. Today, we talk about morphological, syntactic, and phonological change.
- Before we do this, we discuss a myth regarding semantic change first.

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Presentation and discussion

- Presentation on Myth 1: 'The meanings of words should not be allowed to vary or change.'

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Morphological change

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Morphological change

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

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Loss of morphology

- Latin had case markings on nouns. Romance languages do not have any of these today.
- 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
<i>Singular</i>			
Nominative	hund 'dog'	dēor 'animal'	gief 'gift'
Accusative	hund	dēor	gief-u
Genitive	hund-es	dēor-es	gief-e
Dative	hund-e	dēor-e	gief-e
<i>Plural</i>			
Nominative	hund-as	dēor	gief-a
Accusative	hund-as	dēor	gief-a
Genitive	hund-a	dēor-a	gief-a
Dative	hund-um	dēor-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
<i>Singular</i>			
Nominative	hund	hund	hound
Accusative	hund	hund	hound
Genitive	hund-es	hund-(e)s	hound's
Dative	hund-e	hund-(e)	hound
<i>Plural</i>			
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 discuss later today.

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Loss of derivational morphemes

- A derivational rule may be lost with or without remnants. If there are many remnants, we say that the rule has become unproductive. This is what happened to the suffix *-t*, which was once used to derive nouns from verbs in English:

draw → *draft*

drive → *drift*

shove → *shift*

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Loss of derivational morphemes

- Old English had a suffix *-u* to make nouns from adjectives:
 - menig* "many" → *menigu* "multitude"
 - eald* "old" → *ealdu* "old age"
- This was completely lost; there are no remnant words.

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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 applied also 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
<i>hād</i>	'state, condition, rank'	-hood (childhood)
<i>dōm</i>	'condition, power'	-dom (freedom)
<i>(ge-)lic</i>	'similar, equal, like'	-ly (fatherly)

- lexical 'do' → grammatical 'do'

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New affixes from "false" analysis

- New affixes may arise from a *false* analysis of words that have a morphological structure. The process is also called **folk etymology**:
alcoholic → *workaholic*, *chocaholic*, *shopaholic*
hamburger → *cheeseburger*, *fishburger*, *chickenburger*

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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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Syntactic change

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Syntactic change: Word Order

- Word order in a language could change over time. For example, Old English (OE) had more variable word order than Modern English (ModE) does.
- So, we do find SVO order in simple transitive clauses:

Hē geseah þone mann
He saw the man

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Syntactic change: Word Order

- When the clause began with an element such as þa (=“then”), the verb would follow that element, therefore preceding the subject:

þa sende sē cyning þone disc
then sent the king the dish
“Then the king sent the dish.”

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Syntactic change: Word Order

- When the object was a pronoun, the order in OE was typically SOV:

Hēo hine lærde
She him saved
“She saved him.”

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Syntactic change: Word Order

- The same SOV word order also prevailed in embedded clauses, even when the object was not a pronoun:

þa hē þone cyning sōhte, hē bēotode
when he the king visited, he boasted
“When he visited the king, he boasted.”

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Syntactic change: Word Order

- As we noted earlier, case markings were lost during the Middle English (MidE) period, and, as you should expect, SVO order became the unmarked word order in the language.
- The following table shows the change in word order frequency that took place around 1300 and 1400:

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Syntactic change: word order

Year	1000	1200	1300	1400	1500
OV %	53	53	40	14	2
VO %	47	47	60	86	98

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Syntactic change: Negation

- Negation in OE was done by placing the negation marker *ne* before a verbal element:

þæt he na siþþan geboren ne wurde
 that he never after born not would-be
 "that he should never be born after that"

- Notice word order and the use of double negatives.

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Double comparatives and superlatives

- Examples:
 - more gladder, more lower, moost royallest, moost shamefullest*
- These were all ok in Middle English.

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Genitives

The Wife's Tale of Bath (MidE)
 The Wife of Bath's Tale (ModE)

The man's hat from Boston (MidE)
 The man from Boston's hat (ModE)

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Phonological change

- Perhaps the most noticeable change in the grammar of a language happens in pronunciation.
- Even though change can affect all areas of phonology (e.g., tone, stress, and syllable structure), we will focus here primarily on change involving individual sounds as they occur in sequence. This is called **sequential change**.

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Assimilation in place or manner

Old Spanish [semða] → 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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Affrication

- Affrication is a form of assimilation in which palatalized stops become affricates, either [tʃ] or [tʃ] if the original stop was voiceless, or [dʒ] or [dʒ] if the original stop was voiced, e.g.,

Latin *centum* [k] → Old French *cent* [ts] “one hundred”

Latin *medius* [d] → Italian *mezzo* [dz] “half”

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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 [bõ] “good”

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Dissimilation

Late Latin [amna] → Spanish [alma] “soul”

Latin [arbor] → Spanish [arbol] “tree”

Italian [albero]

(but cf. French *arbre*).

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Epenthesis

Earlier OE [ganra] → Late OE [gandra] “gander”

Latin [schola] → Spanish [escuela] “school”

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Metathesis

Earlier OE *waps* → Late OE *wasp* “wasp”

Earlier OE *fridda* → Late OE *firdda* “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 [ōrmāre] → French [orn̄er] “decorate”

- Syncope:

Latin [p̄erdere] → 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
stān <u>a</u> s [a]	ston <u>e</u> s [ə]	ston <u>e</u> s [ø]
nam <u>a</u> [a]	nam <u>e</u> [ə]	nam <u>e</u> [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.
- 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:

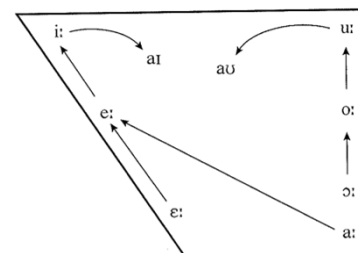
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The Great Vowel Shift

Shift		Example		
Middle English	Modern English	Middle English	Modern English	
[i:]	→ [a]	[mi:s]	→ [maɪs]	mice
[u:]	→ [aʊ]	[mu:s]	→ [maʊs]	mouse
[e:]	→ [i:]	[ge:s]	→ [gi:s]	geese
[o:]	→ [u:]	[go:s]	→ [gu:s]	goose
[e:]	→ [e:]	[bre:ken]	→ [bre:k]	break
[ɔ:]	→ [o:]	[brɔ:ken]	→ [bro:k]	broke
[a:]	→ [e:]	[na:mə]	→ [ne:m]	name

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The Great Vowel Shift



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A pronunciation puzzle

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

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A pronunciation puzzle

- The alternation is the result of the GVS taking place **after** the **Early Middle English Vowel Shortening** rule produced the second word in each pair.

So, why do some language changes make it, and some don't?

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Spread of change through the language

- A linguistic change may manifest itself at first in a few words, and then gradually spreads through the vocabulary of the language. We call this **lexical diffusion**.

Lexical Diffusion

- A good example of lexical diffusion from English has to do with an ongoing change in the stress pattern of words such as *convert*, which can be either a noun or a verb.
- Originally, the stress fell on the second syllable of such words, regardless of their lexical category.
- In the second half of the 16th century, three words, **rebel**, **outlaw**, and **record**, came to be pronounced with the stress on the first syllable when used as nouns. And this stress shift has been “diffusing” ever since.

Diffusion of stress shift in English (graph from O'Grady *et al* 2001)

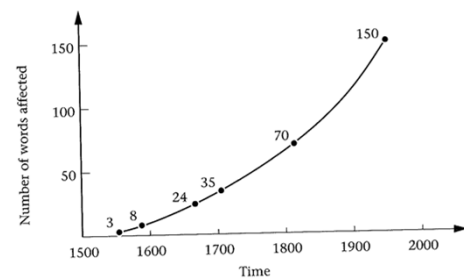


Figure 7.11 Diffusion of stress shift in English

Diffusion of stress shift in English

- Diffused: present conduct conflict
 convert permit suspect
- Not diffused yet: report mistake
 support finance

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Non-gradual Diffusion: Cuban Spanish

- But not all phonological changes involve gradual diffusion. Some changes affect all instances of the sounds involved rather immediately.
- For example, the weakening in Cuban Spanish of [s] to [h] in syllable final-position applies to all instances where [s] occurs in that position:

Spanish Spanish	Cuban Spanish	
[filismente]	[filihmente]	“happily”
[estilo]	[ehtilo]	“type”

Spread of change through the population

- For a particular instance of language change to take place, the innovation must be accepted by the speech community.
- So, even though children acquiring English produce *goed*, the form was never accepted.
- Similarly, *throve* is not accepted as the past tense form of *thrive* (cf. *drive-drove*).

Spread of change through the population

- Social pressures often play an important role in the spread of a particular innovation.
- For example, when a change takes place in the speech of a high prestige group, it may gradually start spreading to other groups, and ultimately to the whole linguistic community.

Spread of change through the population

- The loss of postvocalic [r] along the east coast of the US is a famous example.
- Pronunciations such as [fa:] for [fa:r] originated in parts of England in the 17th and 18th centuries.
- It spread along the east coast of the US by the children of the New England gentry who studied at British schools, as well as the newly arrived immigrants who enjoyed high social status as colonial administrators and church officials.
- As a result, the innovation was widely imitated and spread along much of the east coast and the south.

Spread of change through the population

- But social pressures also limited the spread of that innovation.
- In Pennsylvania and other Midland states the most prestigious group of settlers were Quakers from northern England, an area that retained postvocalic [r].
- Similarly, in Canada, the influence of Scottish and Irish settlers, whose dialect retained the [r], limited the spread of the innovation to those areas there were in contact with New England, e.g., Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.
- Interestingly, as we discussed before, “r-less” pronunciations have become stigmatized and we see an opposite trend for [r] restoration.

Summary of language change and transition to “reconstruction”

- To sum up, a language undergoes change in its lexicon as well as all components of grammar (phonology, morphology, and syntax).
- Over time, these changes might become considerable enough to the point where we become unable to tell if two historical varieties of the same language are actually related.
- Luckily, though, historical linguists developed ways to establish historical relations among languages. We discuss this next week.

Next class agenda

- Historical linguistics and Reconstruction. Finish reading Chapter 8, pp. 362-371 and pp. 375-378.
- Pidgins and Creoles: Read the section in chapter 7 on Languages in contact, pp. 301-312.
- Also, follow the links on the syllabus table online for additional readings on the topic.