THEME

Linguistics in general and morphology in particular are undergoing an important reconceptualization concerning their favored objects of inquiry, their methodologies, and consequent hypotheses about theory construction. In the broadest terms this relates to detailed descriptions of wide ranges of typologically different languages, reliance on experimental and computational methods, and hypotheses bearing on the nature of theories resulting from the quantitative modeling of complex interactions among multiple independent systems. Predictably, all of these new perspectives on the nature of language raise novel questions concerning language learning (Lappin and Clark in press) and language evolution (Fitch 2010).

Language models formulated in terms of inviolable, but parameterizable, principles and restricted to so-called core phenomena are gradually being replaced by theories which examine broader expanses of grammar sensitive both to surface language variation and the gradient nature of phenomena. This trend is characterized broadly across several linguistic subdisciplines in Evans and Levinson (2009, 2010). The nature of these changes align linguistics more with recent dynamic systems perspectives on analysis in the developmental sciences (Oyama et. al. 2000, Weber and Depew 2003), than with the familiar deductive approaches that have characterized the transformational generative philosophy of language. There appears to be a convergent intuition within several developmental disciplines, i.e., (ecological) developmental evolutionary biology (Gilbert and Eper 2009, Barberousse et. al. 2009, Pigliucci and Müller 2010) and developmental (constructivist) psychology (Gottlieb 1991, 2000, Elman et. al. 1997, Karmiloff-Smith 1992, M. Blumberg 2005, Stiles 2009, among others), that many old, often forgotten, insights find fruitful reformulation when modern techniques are applied to new organisms that may be outside the model systems sanctioned by previous research: the future of the field, then depends on identifying more appropriate model systems. Gilbert 2009:68 concludes. “The new model systems not only reflect a new approach to developmental biology; they also reflect a new model of reality.” The same might be said of linguistics.

In the spirit of synthesis within the developmental sciences, the present workshop explores issues bearing on quantitative (largely, information-theoretic, statistical, simulational) techniques applied to complex, typologically-diverse morphological and lexical systems. It attempts to identify instructive morphological model systems that provide a new view on the nature of explanation for morphological phenomena and related issues concerning morphological learning and evolution. The speakers, despite divergent interests and analytic approaches, share a belief in the primacy and theoretical centrality of words and paradigms for the understanding of morphological systems.

Many thanks to the UCSD Center for Human Development and UCSD Division of Social Sciences for their generous support of this workshop.
PROGRAM

Saturday, January 15, 2011

8:45am  Continental Breakfast

9.15am - 10.15am  Paradigms, syntagmatics, and the agglutinative ideal
Farrell Ackerman (UCSD) and Rob Malouf (SDSU)

10.15am - 11.15am  Measuring inflectional complexity: French and Mauritian
Olivier Bonami (Université Paris - Sorbonne), Gilles Boyé (Bordeaux U.)
and Fabiola Henri (U. of Mauritius)

11.15am - 12.15pm  Explaining inflectional defectiveness: Information theory and the
inflectional paradigm from synchronic and diachronic perspective
Andrea Sims (Ohio State University)

12.15pm - 1.30pm  Lunch Break

1.30pm - 2.30pm  Item and pattern morphology
Jim Blevins (Cambridge University)

2.30pm - 3.30pm  Entropy, relative entropy, and naive discriminative learning
Harald Baayen (University of Alberta)

3.30pm - 3.45pm  Break

3.45pm - 4.45pm  The Effective Complexity of morphological systems: Can we hope to
ever obtain a complete and correct description of a language’s
morphology?
Fermin Moscoso del Prado Martín (Laboratoire Dynamique du Langage)

4.45pm - 5.45pm  Lexical learning and lexical diffusion: studies on dispersion, social
factors, and cultural consumption
Paula Chesley (University of Minnesota)
PROGRAM

Sunday, January 16, 2011

8:45am  Continental Breakfast

9.15am - 10.15am  Input, uncertainty and the early course of language development
Colin Bannard (University of Texas at Austin)

10.15am - 11.15am  Information structure and learning: The artificiality of grammar
Michael Ramscar

11.15am - 12.15pm  Entropy measures and predictive recognition as mirrored in gating
and lexical decision over multimorphemic Hungarian noun forms
Csaba Pléh (BME Kognitív Tudományi Tanszék), Kornél Németh (BME
Kognitív Tudományi Tanszék), Judit Fazekas (BME Kognitív Tudományi
Tanszék) and Daniel Varga (MOK BME)

12.15pm - 1.30pm  Lunch Break

1.30pm - 2.30pm  Blinkered vision: Sources of opacity in inflectional paradigms
Raphael Finkel (U. of Kentucky) and Greg Stump (U. of Kentucky)

2.30pm - 3.30pm  Parsing with paradigms: A realizational approach for specification
and statistical learning of grammatical descriptions
Reut Tsarfaty (Uppsala University)

3.30pm - 3.45pm  Break

3.45pm - 4.45pm  Self-organization in the English suffix system
Mark Lindsay (SUNY, Stonybrook)

4.45pm - 5.45pm  Towards a stochastic model of linguistic competence
Shalom Lappin (King’s College London)